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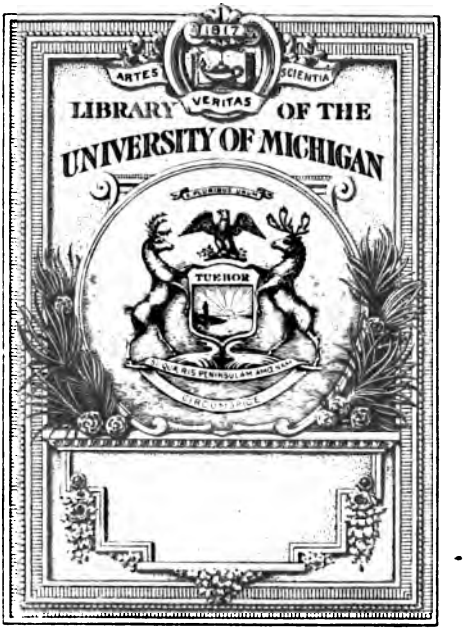
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The History of the Caliph Vathek

THE HISTORY OF
The Caliph Vathek

By William Beckford, Esq.

PRINTED VERBATIM FROM FIRST EDITION, WITH THE ORIGINAL PREFACES AND NOTES BY HENLEY

NEW YORK
James Pott & Company

Preface

WILLIAM BECKFORD, the author of "Vathek," was born in 1759. He was the son of the well-known and patriotic Lord Mayor Beckford, the friend of the Earl of Chatham. His father died when he was eleven years of age, leaving him property which accumulated during his minority to an annual income of one hundred and ten thousand pounds, and this in addition to a million in ready money.

His education was partially superintended by his father's old friend, the Earl of Chatham, whose son, William Pitt, he excelled in elocutionary powers. At the age of eighteen he published his "Memoirs of Extraordinary Painters," a work of considerable power and humour, and real knowledge of the subject, which satirises some English artists under feigned names, and may even now be read with pleasure.

In 1780 he made a tour to the Continent, which formed the subject of a series of letters picturesque and poetical, since published under

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the title of "Italy, with Sketches of Spain and Portugal." On his return to England, Mr. Beckford sat for the borough of Hindon in several parliaments. He afterwards went to Portugal, and purchasing an estate at Cintra—that "glorious Eden" of the south—he built himself a palace for a residence.

"There thou, too, Vathek! England's wealthiest son,
Once formed thy paradise, as not aware
When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,—
Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.
Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan
Beneath yon mountain's ever-beauteous brow;
But now, as if a thing unblest by man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou:
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide;
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the plesaunces on earth supplied,
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide."

"Recollections of an Excursion to the Monasteries of Alcobaça and Batalha," was published in 1835. The excursion was made in June 1794, at the desire of the Prince Regent of Portugal. Mr. Beckford describes the wonderful ancient ecclesiastical edifice of Alcobaça, with its princely monks, its paintings, and antique tombs and fountains, as only a mind

of the highest imagination could do. The kitchen, whither he and his friends were conducted by the Abbot, to witness the preparations made to regale them, must have been worthy of an eastern sultan. "Through the centre of the immense and nobly-groined hall, not less than sixty feet in diameter, ran a brisk rivulet of the clearest water, containing every sort and size of the finest river fish. On one side loads of game and venison were heaped up; on the other vegetables and fruits in endless variety. Beyond a long line of stores extended a row of ovens, and close to them hillocks of wheaten flour whiter than snow, rocks of sugar, jars of the purest oil, and pastry in vast abundance, which a numerous tribe of lay brothers and their attendants were rolling out and puffing up into a hundred different shapes, singing all the while as blithely as larks in a cornfield." This magnificent monastery was plundered and burnt by the French troops under Massena, in 1811.

"Vathek," the fourth and last edition of which was published in 1834, by Bentley, is unquestionably Beckford's great work, the one for which he will always hold a high rank amongst romantic and imaginative writers. The first edition of this work in French was printed at Lausanne in 1787. It was written

at the age of twenty-two, at one sitting, as Beckford himself told Cyrus Redding. Day and night he kept to his work, only stopping occasionally for refreshment, and as might have been expected, such protracted application brought on a fit of illness.

"Vathek," says Lord Byron, "bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will have some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation."

In his own preface, Mr. Beckford says, "J'ai preparé quelques épisodes; ils sont indiqués à la page 200,* comme faisant suite à Vathek; peut-être parâitront-ils un jour." But they have not appeared yet. Beckford at his house in Park Lane, in his eightieth year, read them to Cyrus Redding, in the twilight of a gloomy spring day, and without spectacles; but Mr. Redding does not appear to have considered these episodes important. He (Mr. Redding) mentions the fact, that Beckford gave strict orders for the purchase of a certain Eastern book, entitled "Abdallah: les Aventures du Fils de Hanif, envoyé par le Sultan des Indes à la Découverte de l'Isle de Borico où est la Fontaine merveilleuse dont l'eau fait rajeunir." "There was nothing in 'Vathek,'" says

*We have given the titles of these Episodes; the only part ever published.

Mr. Redding, "that might not have been found in 'Abdallah,' which is supposed to be from an Arabic MS. found in Batavia. The time in which the events of the history occur is the reign of Chah-Jehan. The Hindoo mythology is commingled in it with that of the Arabs. Genius and Ginne, the Divs and Peris, the mountain Kaf, and the empire of Ginnistan; in fact Indian and Mohammedan notions intermingled, seemed to explain the source, which, from happening to be in the hands of young Beckford at the moment, supplied the images and terms which were requisite in order to render the Eastern illusion in 'Vathek' complete. The two kinds of Genii called Dives, or Divs and Peris masculine, and Perises and Dives feminine, according to the Mohammedan doctors, inhabited the earth before the creation of Adam. Dazzial and his ass, Lutfallah, Gian's sword, Ronschau and similar names or objects on which elaborate notes have been written, may all be found in the work in question."

Byron praises "Vathek" for its correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination. "As an Eastern tale," he says, "even Rasselas must bow before it; his Happy Valley will not bear a comparison with the Hall of Eblis."

As might be expected, the aim of the fortune-favoured author of "Vathek" appears to have been to realize through his surroundings the dreams and fictions of his fancy; yet he does not seem to have brought himself in bondage to his *entourage*, for, in 1822, he sold Fonthill, and left for Bath, taking with him his most precious articles of furniture and curiosities, and glad of the change.

Fonthill Abbey, Hazlitt called, "A desert of magnificence, a glittering waste of laborious idleness, a cathedral turned into a toy-shop, an immense museum of all that is most curious and costly, and at the same time most worthless in the productions of art and nature." The tower of the abbey seems to have met with the misfortunes incidental to all towers, from that of Babel downwards. At one time it tumbled down; at another was partially burnt, the owner himself watching the flames with as much composure as if they had not devoured what it would cost a fortune to repair; but Mr. Beckford had determined upon the completion of his cherished scheme, and once the royal works of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, were abandoned, that 460 men might be employed night and day on Fonthill Abbey. These men were made to relieve each other by regular watches; and during the longest and darkest

nights of winter the astonished traveller might see the tower rising under their hands, the trowel and torch being associated for that purpose. This must have had a very extraordinary appearance, and we are told that it was another of those exhibitions which Mr. Beckford was fond of contemplating. He is represented as surveying the work thus expedited, the busy levy of masons, the high and giddy dancing of the lights, and the strange effects produced upon the architecture and woods below, from one of the eminences in the walks, and wasting the coldest hours of December darkness in feasting his sense with this display of almost superhuman power. Thus far the extinct *Literary Gazette* of 1822. Critics, unless of a very rare kind indeed, are permitted to write nonsense with impunity; it pleases them, and does us little harm; but we may as well pause to ask what there is of "superhuman power" in a millionaire, the son of a very rich man,* spending his money foolishly, and hastening to a rotten and unfinished completion a building which fell to decay before the paint was well dry, on its rococo and false

* Beckford derived his great wealth from estates in Jamaica, of which island his grandfather was governor, and his father speaker in the House of Assembly. He had not even the merit of first accumulating the wealth which he so lavishly squandered.

decorations? Beckford seems to have been a second-hand Horace Walpole, *plus* two millions of money, *minus* what wit the gossiping Horace had. The master threw off as a *tour de force* a somewhat rubbishing gothic romance, the "Castle of Otranto;" his imitator did, in a like manner, produce "Vathek." Both romances have little moral, and are written with insufficient knowledge of time or place, yet both are so distant that the reader fails to detect incongruities, and the books form pleasant reading. Both authors claim to have merely played with letters. Walpole kept himself awake with strong coffee, and wrote his story "all at once." "Vathek" was also written "at one sitting." Walpole did not even know there was a castle at Otranto. Beckford was equally ignorant of the localities described in "Vathek." Walpole was, however, fonder of his child than Beckford; probably he was more truly the parent of his curiosity of literature, not the least curious part being that both books should become in some sort classics. Beckford even carried his imitation so far as to give in some respect a reproduction of Strawberry Hill at Fonthill. These details are characteristic of Mr. Beckford, and form an interesting illustration of his peculiar taste and genius.

In 1783, after three years of married life, his first wife died, and he immediately united himself to Lady Margaret Gordon,* daughter of the Earl of Aboyne, a lady of wonderful sweetness of disposition, whom he met at Bath. He was then only twenty-four.

"His manners," says Cyrus Redding, speaking of him near the close of his long life, "his manners were those of the school fashionable between 1790 and 1800. He was above the middle height, well-formed, and slender rather than stout. His features indicated intellectual power. He had small, remarkably piercing grey eyes, and, at eighty-four, had no need of spectacles. He generally wore a green coat with cloth buttons, a buff-coloured striped waistcoat, breeches of the same kind of cloth as the coat, and brown-topped boots, the fine cotton stocking appearing over them. His voice was agreeable, and his enunciation rapid; and when he ceased talking he would frequently place his freckled fingers over his lips. His bodily activity at eighty was equal to that of a man of sixty: his face alone bore signs of age, though not more than a hale man of seventy would carry."

*Thus far most biographies; a correspondent who seems to have known Mr. Beckford, asserts that he was only once married.

He was so passionately fond of old and rare books, that it was a greater treat to him to be in their company than in the society of the noblest men and women in England. In his last illness he was still faithful to his books, and pertinaciously read till he could read no longer, when he quietly died after a short and comparatively painless illness at Bath, in 1844, at the advanced age of eighty-four.

The present edition, which is, we believe, the fifth, is printed *verbatim* from the first English edition. The first was published, as Beckford tells us in his preface, which we subjoin, in Paris, from a translation made for the author. He would have us believe that this was by a mistake; the probability is that it was merely the result of a knowing calculation on the part of the author, and copies of the French work having been circulated in England, before the appearance of the original, there was no doubt much talk about the book, since those who were happy enough to get a glimpse at it, magnified its beauties and its merits. Thus Lord Byron, who too often wrote for effect, praises it as a work of genius, and draws a comparison, where, indeed, none exists, between the happy valley of Rasselas and the Hall of Eblis of Vathek.

Truly that is the crowning scene, and in its

prosaic grandeur will bear reading even after the astounding and sublime gloom of Milton and Dante, from the latter of whom the image of the hearts for ever devoured by flames is no doubt taken. As a work of imagination, full of a gloomy colouring, which is not, and an aimless tyranny which is, truly Eastern, and as the last of a long line of a class of stories, formerly so popular that Pope says of Phillips, that he

"Turned a Persian tale for half-a-crown,"

Vathek is deserving the popularity it has gained, while the fervour of its composition, and the *verve* of its too careless style, will always preserve it. To make our volume as complete as possible, we add the characteristic preface to the third French edition by the author, and for the same reason we have added the exhaustive though somewhat pedantic notes to the first edition by Dr. Henley.

The History of the Caliph Vathek

VATHEK, ninth Caliph of the race of the Abassides, was the son of Motassem, and the grandson of Haroun Al Raschid. From an early accession to the throne, and the talents he possessed to adorn it, his subjects were induced to expect that his reign would be long and happy. His figure was pleasing and majestic; but when he was angry one of his eyes became so terrible, that no person could bear to behold it, and the wretch upon whom it was fixed instantly fell backward, and sometimes expired. For fear, however, of depopulating his dominions and making his palace desolate, he but rarely gave way to his anger.

Being much addicted to women and the pleasures of the table, he sought by his affability to procure agreeable companions; and he succeeded the better as his generosity was unbounded, and his indulgences unrestrained, for he was by no means scrupulous, nor did he think with the Caliph Omar Ben Abdalaziz,

that it was necessary to make a hell of this world to enjoy Paradise in the next.

He surpassed in magnificence all his predecessors. The palace of Alkoremmi, which his father Motassem had erected on the hill of Pied Horses, and which commanded the whole city of Samarah, was in his idea far too scanty; he added therefore five wings, or rather other palaces, which he destined for the particular gratification of each of his senses.

In the first of these were tables continually covered with the most exquisite dainties, which were supplied both by night and by day according to their constant consumption, whilst the most delicious wines and the choicest cordials flowed forth from a hundred fountains that were never exhausted. This palace was called, "The Eternal or Unsatiating Banquet."

The second was styled "The Temple of Melody, or the Nectar of the Soul." It was inhabited by the most skilful musicians and admired poets of the time, who not only displayed their talents within, but dispersing in bands without, caused every surrounding scene to reverberate their songs, which were continually varied in the most delightful succession.

The palace named "The Delight of the Eyes, or the Support of Memory," was one entire enchantment. Rarities collected from every

corner of the earth were there found in such profusion as to dazzle and confound, but for the order in which they were arranged. One gallery exhibited the pictures of the celebrated Mani, and statues that seemed to be alive. Here a well-managed perspective attracted the sight, there the magic of optics agreeably deceived it; whilst the naturalist on his part exhibited, in their several classes, the various gifts that Heaven had bestowed on our globe. In a word, Vathek omitted nothing in this palace that might gratify the curiosity of those who resorted to it, although he was not able to satisfy his own, for he was of all men the most curious.

"The Palace of Perfumes," which was termed likewise "The Incentive to Pleasure," consisted of various halls where the different perfumes which the earth produces were kept perpetually burning in censers of gold. Flambeaus and aromatic lamps were here lighted in open day. But the too powerful effects of this agreeable delirium might be avoided by descending into an immense garden, where an assemblage of every fragrant flower diffused through the air the purest odours.

The fifth palace, denominated "The Retreat of Joy, or the Dangerous," was frequented by troops of young females beautiful as the houris

and not less seducing, who never failed to receive with caresses all whom the Caliph allowed to approach them; for he was by no means disposed to be jealous, as his own women were secluded within the palace he inhabited himself.

Notwithstanding the sensuality in which Vathek indulged, he experienced no abatement in the love of his people, who thought that a sovereign immersed in pleasure was not less tolerable to his subjects than one that employed himself in creating them foes. But the unquiet and impetuous disposition of the Caliph would not allow him to rest there; he had studied so much for his amusement in the lifetime of his father, as to acquire a great deal of knowledge, though not a sufficiency to satisfy himself; for he wished to know every thing, even sciences that did not exist. He was fond of engaging in disputes with the learned, but liked them not to push their opposition with warmth; he stopped the mouths of those with presents whose mouths could be stopped, whilst others, whom his liberality was unable to subdue, he sent to prison to cool their blood; a remedy that often succeeded.

Vathek discovered also a predilection for theological controversy, but it was not with the orthodox that he usually held. By this means

he induced the zealots to oppose him, and then persecuted them in return; for he resolved at any rate to have reason on his side.

The great prophet Mahomet, whose vicars the caliphs are, beheld with indignation from his abode in the seventh heaven the irreligious conduct of such a vicegerent. "Let us leave him to himself," said he to the genii, who are always ready to receive his commands; "let us see to what lengths his folly and impiety will carry him; if he run into excess we shall know how to chastise him. Assist him, therefore, to complete the tower which, in imitation of Nimrod, he hath begun, not, like that great warrior, to escape being drowned, but from the insolent curiosity of penetrating the secrets of Heaven; he will not divine the fate that awaits him."

The Genii obeyed, and when the workmen had raised their structure a cubit in the day time, two cubits more were added in the night. The expedition with which the fabric arose was not a little flattering to the vanity of Vathek. He fancied that even insensible matter showed a forwardness to subserve his designs, not considering that the successes of the foolish and wicked form the first rod of their chastisement.

His pride arrived at its height when, having

ascended for the first time the eleven thousand stairs of his tower, he cast his eyes below and beheld men not larger than pismires, mountains than shells, and cities than beehives. The idea which such an elevation inspired of his own grandeur completely bewildered him; he was almost ready to adore himself, till, lifting his eyes upward, he saw the stars as high above him as they appeared when he stood on the surface of the earth. He consoled himself, however, for this transient perception of his littleness, with the thought of being great in the eyes of others, and flattered himself that the light of his mind would extend beyond the reach of his sight, and transfer to the stars the decrees of his destiny.

With this view the inquisitive Prince passed most of his nights on the summit of his tower, till he became an adept in the mysteries of astrology, and imagined that the planets had disclosed to him the most marvellous adventures, which were to be accomplished by an extraordinary personage from a country altogether unknown. Prompted by motives of curiosity he had always been courteous to strangers, but from this instant he redoubled his attention, and ordered it to be announced by sound of trumpet, through all the streets of Samarah that no one of his subjects, on peril of displeas-

ure, should either lodge or detain a traveller, but forthwith bring him to the palace.

Not long after this proclamation there arrived in his metropolis a man so hideous, that the very guards who arrested him were forced to shut their eyes as they led him along. The Caliph himself appeared startled at so horrible a visage, but joy succeeded to this emotion of terror when the stranger displayed to his view such rarities as he had never before seen, and of which he had no conception.

In reality nothing was ever so extraordinary as the merchandize this stranger produced; most of his curiosities, which were not less admirable for their workmanship than splendour, had besides, their several virtues described on a parchment fastened to each. There were slippers which enabled the feet to walk; knives that cut without the motion of a hand; sabres which dealt the blow at the person they were wished to strike, and the whole enriched with gems that were hitherto unknown.

The sabres, whose blades emitted a dazzling radiance, fixed more than all the Caliph's attention, who promised himself to decipher at his leisure the uncouth characters engraven on their sides. Without, therefore, demanding their price, he ordered all the coined gold to be brought from his treasury, and commanded

the merchant to take what he pleased; the stranger complied with modesty and silence.

Vathek, imagining that the merchant's taciturnity was occasioned by the awe which his presence inspired, encouraged him to advance, and asked him, with an air of condescension, "Who he was? whence he came? and where he obtained such beautiful commodities?" The man, or rather monster, instead of making a reply, thrice rubbed his forehead, which, as well as his body, was blacker than ebony, four times clapped his paunch, the projection of which was enormous, opened wide his huge eyes which glowed like firebrands, began to laugh with a hideous noise, and discovered his long amber-coloured teeth bestreaked with green.

The Caliph, though a little startled, renewed his inquiries, but without being able to procure a reply; at which, beginning to be ruffled, he exclaimed: "Knowest thou, varlet, who I am? and at whom thou art aiming thy gibes?" Then, addressing his guards, "Have ye heard him speak? is he dumb?"

"He hath spoken," they replied, "though but little."

"Let him speak again then," said Vathek, "and tell me who he is, from whence he came, and where he procured these singular curiosi-

ties, or I swear by the ass of Balaam that I will make him rue his pertinacity."

The menace was accompanied by the Caliph with one of his angry and perilous glances, which the stranger sustained without the slightest emotion, although his eyes were fixed on the terrible eye of the Prince.

No words can describe the amazement of the courtiers when they beheld this rude merchant withstand the encounter unshocked. They all fell prostrate with their faces on the ground to avoid the risk of their lives, and continued in the same abject posture till the Caliph exclaimed in a furious tone: "Up, cowards! seize the miscreant! see that he be committed to prison and guarded by the best of my soldiers! Let him, however, retain the money I gave him, it is not my intent to take from him his property, I only want him to speak."

No sooner had he uttered these words than the stranger was surrounded, pinioned with strong fetters, and hurried away to the prison of the great tower, which was encompassed by seven empalements of iron bars, and armed with spikes in every direction longer and sharper than spits.

The Caliph, nevertheless, remained in the most violent agitation; he sat down indeed to eat, but of the three hundred covers that were

daily placed before him could taste of no more than thirty-two. A diet to which he had been so little accustomed was sufficient of itself to prevent him from sleeping; what then must be its effect when joined to the anxiety that preyed upon his spirits? At the first glimpse of dawn he hastened to the prison, again to importune this intractable stranger; but the rage of Vathek exceeded all bounds on finding the prison empty, the gates burst asunder, and his guards lying lifeless around him. In the paroxysm of his passion he fell furiously on the poor carcasses, and kicked them till evening without intermission. His courtiers and vizirs exerted their efforts to soothe his extravagance, but finding every expedient ineffectual they all united in one vociferation: "The Caliph is gone mad! the Caliph is out of his senses!"

This outcry, which soon resounded through the streets of Samarah, at length reaching the ears of Carathis his mother, she flew in the utmost consternation to try her ascendancy on the mind of her son. Her tears and caresses called off his attention, and he was prevailed upon by her entreaties to be brought back to the palace.

Carathis, apprehensive of leaving Vathek to himself, caused him to be put to bed, and seating herself by him, endeavoured by her con-

versation to heal and compose him. Nor could any one have attempted it with better success, for the Caliph not only loved her as a mother, but respected her as a person of superior genius; it was she who had induced him, being a Greek herself, to adopt all the sciences and systems of her country, which good Mussulmans hold in such thorough abhorrence. Judicial astrology was one of those systems in which Carathis was a perfect adept; she began therefore with reminding her son of the promise which the stars had made him, and intimated an intention of consulting them again.

"Alas!" sighed the Caliph, as soon as he could speak, "what a fool have I been! not for the kicks bestowed on my guards who so tamely submitted to death, but for never considering that this extraordinary man was the same the planets had foretold, whom, instead of ill-treating, I should have conciliated by all the arts of persuasion."

"The past," said Carathis, "cannot be recalled, but it behoves us to think of the future; perhaps you may again see the object you so much regret; it is possible the inscriptions on the sabres will afford information. Eat, therefore, and take thy repose, my dear son; we will consider, to-morrow, in what manner to act."

Vathek yielded to her counsel as well as he

could, and arose in the morning with a mind more at ease. The sabres he commanded to be instantly brought, and poring upon them through a green glass, that their glittering might not dazzle, he set himself in earnest to decipher the inscriptions; but his reiterated attempts were all of them nugatory; in vain did he beat his head and bite his nails, not a letter of the whole was he able to ascertain. So unlucky a disappointment would have undone him again, had not Carathis by good fortune entered the apartment.

"Have patience, son!" said she; "you certainly are possessed of every important science, but the knowledge of languages is a trifle at best, and the accomplishment of none but a pedant. Issue forth a proclamation that you will confer such rewards as become your greatness upon any one that shall interpret what you do not understand, and what it is beneath you to learn, you will soon find your curiosity gratified."

"That may be," said the Caliph; "but in the mean time I shall be horribly disgusted by a crowd of smatterers, who will come to the trial as much for the pleasure of retailing their jargon as from the hope of gaining the reward. To avoid this evil, it will be proper to add that I will put every candidate to death who shall

fail to give satisfaction; for, thank heaven! I have skill enough to distinguish between one that translates and one that invents."

"Of that I have no doubt," replied Carathis; "but to put the ignorant to death is somewhat severe, and may be productive of dangerous effects; content yourself with commanding their beards to be burnt,—beards in a state are not quite so essential as men."

The Caliph submitted to the reasons of his mother, and sending for Morakanabad, his prime vizir, said: "Let the common criers proclaim, not only in Samarah, but throughout every city in my empire, that whosoever will repair hither and decipher certain characters which appear to be inexplicable, shall experience the liberality for which I am renowned; but that all who fail upon trial shall have their beards burnt off to the last hair. Let them add also that I will bestow fifty beautiful slaves, and as many jars of apricots from the isle of Kirmith, upon any man that shall bring me intelligence of the stranger."

The subjects of the Caliph, like their sovereign, being great admirers of women and apricots from Kirmith, felt their mouths water at these promises, but were totally unable to gratify their hankering, for no one knew which way the stranger had gone.

As to the Caliph's other requisition, the result was different. The learned, the half-learned, and those who were neither, but fancied themselves equal to both, came boldly to hazard their beards, and all shamefully lost them.

The exaction of these forfeitures, which found sufficient employment for the eunuchs, gave them such a smell of singed hair as greatly to disgust the ladies of the seraglio, and make it necessary that this new occupation of their guardians should be transferred into other hands.

At length, however, an old man presented himself whose beard was a cubit and a half longer than any that had appeared before him. The officers of the palace whispered to each other, as they ushered him in, "What a pity such a beard should be burnt!" Even the Caliph, when he saw it, concurred with them in opinion, but his concern was entirely needless. This venerable personage read the characters with facility, and explained them verbatim as follows: "We were made where every thing good is made; we are the least of the wonders of a place where all is wonderful, and deserving the sight of the first potentate on earth."

"You translate admirably!" cried Vathek;

"I know to what these marvellous characters allude. Let him receive as many robes of honour and thousands of sequins of gold, as he hath spoken words. I am in some measure relieved from the perplexity that embarrassed me!"

Vathek invited the old man to dine, and even to remain some days in the palace. Unluckily for him he accepted the offer; for the Caliph, having ordered him next morning to be called, said: "Read again to me what you have read already; I cannot hear too often the promise that is made me, the completion of which I languish to obtain."

The old man forthwith put on his green spectacles, but they instantly dropped from his nose, on perceiving that the characters he had read the day preceding had given place to others of different import.

"What ails you?" asked the Caliph; "and why these symptoms of wonder?"

"Sovereign of the world," replied the old man, "these sabres hold another language today from that they yesterday held."

"How say you?" returned Vathek—"but it matters not! tell me, if you can, what they mean."

"It is this, my Lord," rejoined the old man: "Woe to the rash mortal who seeks to know

that of which he should remain ignorant, and to undertake that which surpasseth his power!"

"And woe to thee!" cried the Caliph, in a burst of indignation; "to-day thou art void of understanding; begone from my presence, they shall burn but the half of thy beard, because thou wert yesterday fortunate in guessing;—my gifts I never resume."

The old man, wise enough to perceive he had luckily escaped, considering the folly of disclosing so disgusting a truth, immediately withdrew and appeared not again.

But it was not long before Vathek discovered abundant reason to regret his precipitation; for though he could not decipher the characters himself, yet by constantly poring upon them he plainly perceived that they every day changed, and unfortunately no other candidate offered to explain them. This perplexing occupation inflamed his blood, dazzled his sight, and brought on a giddiness and debility that he could not support. He failed not, however, though in so reduced a condition, to be often carried to his tower, as he flattered himself that he might there read in the stars which he went to consult something more congenial to his wishes: but in this his hopes were deluded; for his eyes, dimmed by the vapours of

his head, began to subserve his curiosity so ill, that he beheld nothing but a thick dun cloud, which he took for the most direful of omens.

Agitated with so much anxiety, Vathek entirely lost all firmness; a fever seized him, and his appetite failed. Instead of being one of the greatest eaters he became as distinguished for drinking. So insatiable was the thirst which tormented him, that his mouth, like a funnel, was always open to receive the various liquors that might be poured into it, and especially cold water, which calmed him more than every other.

This unhappy prince being thus incapacitated for the enjoyment of any pleasure, commanded the palaces of the five senses to be shut up, forbore to appear in public, either to display his magnificence or administer justice, and retired to the inmost apartment of his harem. As he had ever been an indulgent husband, his wives, overwhelmed with grief at his deplorable situation, incessantly offered their prayers for his health and unremittingly supplied him with water.

In the mean time the Princess Carathis, whose affliction no words can describe, instead of restraining herself to sobbing and tears, was closeted daily with the Vizir Morakanabad, to find out some cure or mitigation of the

Caliph's disease. Under the persuasion that it was caused by enchantment, they turned over together, leaf by leaf, all the books of magic that might point out a remedy, and caused the horrible stranger, whom they accused as the enchanter, to be every where sought for with the strictest diligence.

At the distance of a few miles from Samarah stood a high mountain, whose sides were swarded with wild thyme and basil, and its summit overspread with so delightful a plain, that it might be taken for the paradise destined for the faithful. Upon it grew a hundred thickets of eglantine and other fragrant shrubs, a hundred arbours of roses, jessamine and honeysuckle, as many clumps of orange trees, cedar and citron, whose branches, interwoven with the palm, the pomegranate, and the vine, presented every luxury that could regale the eye or the taste. The ground was strewed with violets, hare-bells, and pansies, in the midst of which sprung forth tufts of jonquils, hyacinths and carnations, with every other perfume that impregnates the air. Four fountains, not less clear than deep, and so abundant as to slake the thirst of ten armies, seemed profusely placed here to make the scene more resemble the garden of Eden, which was watered by the four sacred rivers. Here the nightingale

sang the birth of the rose, her well-beloved, and at the same time lamented its short-lived beauty; whilst the turtle deplored the loss of more substantial pleasures, and the wakeful lark hailed the rising light that reanimates the whole creation. Here more than any where the mingled melodies of birds expressed the various passions they inspired, as if the exquisite fruits which they pecked at pleasure had given them a double energy.

To this mountain Vathek was sometimes brought for the sake of breathing a purer air, and especially to drink at will of the four fountains, which were reputed in the highest degree salubrious and sacred to himself. His attendants were his mother, his wives, and some eunuchs, who assiduously employed themselves in filling capacious bowls of rock crystal, and emulously presenting them to him; but it frequently happened that his avidity exceeded their zeal, insomuch that he would prostrate himself upon the ground to lap up the water, of which he could never have enough.

One day when this unhappy prince had been long lying in so debasing a posture, a voice, hoarse but strong, thus addressed him: "Why assumest thou the function of a dog, O Caliph, so proud of thy dignity and power?"

At this apostrophe he raised his head and

beheld the stranger that had caused him so much affliction. Inflamed with anger at the sight, he exclaimed:

"Accursed Giaour! what comest thou hither to do? is it not enough to have transformed a prince remarkable for his agility into one of those leather barrels which the Bedouin Arabs carry on their camels when they traverse the deserts? Perceivest thou not that I may perish by drinking to excess no less than by a total abstinence?"

"Drink then this draught," said the stranger, as he presented to him a phial of a red and yellow mixture; "and, to satiate the thirst of thy soul as well as of thy body, know that I am an Indian, but from a region of India which is wholly unknown."

The Caliph, delighted to see his desires accomplished in part, and flattering himself with the hope of obtaining their entire fulfilment, without a moment's hesitation swallowed the potion, and instantaneously found his health restored, his thirst appeased, and his limbs as agile as ever.

In the transports of his joy Vathek leaped upon the neck of the frightful Indian, and kissed his horrid mouth and hollow cheeks as though they had been the coral lips, and the lilies and roses of his most beautiful wives;

whilst they, less terrified than jealous at the sight, dropped their veils to hide the blush of mortification that suffused their foreheads.

Nor would the scene have closed here, had not Carathis, with all the art of insinuation, a little repressed the raptures of her son. Having prevailed upon him to return to Samarah, she caused a herald to precede him, whom she commanded to proclaim as loudly as possible: "The wonderful stranger hath appeared again, he hath healed the Caliph, he hath spoken! he hath spoken!"

Forthwith all the inhabitants of this vast city quitted their habitations, and ran together in crowds to see the procession of Vathek and the Indian, whom they now blessed as much as they had before execrated, incessantly shouting: "He hath healed our sovereign, he hath spoken! he hath spoken!" Nor were these words forgotten in the public festivals which were celebrated the same evening, to testify the general joy; for the poets applied them as a chorus to all the songs they composed.

The Caliph in the meanwhile caused the palaces of the senses to be again set open; and, as he found himself prompted to visit that of taste in preference to the rest, immediately ordered a splendid entertainment, to which his great officers and favourite courtiers were all

invited. The Indian, who was placed near the Prince, seemed to think that as a proper acknowledgment of so distinguished a privilege he could neither eat, drink nor talk too much. The various dainties were no sooner served up than they vanished, to the great mortification of Vathek, who piqued himself on being the greatest eater alive, and at this time in particular had an excellent appetite.

The rest of the company looked round at each other in amazement; but the Indian without appearing to observe it quaffed large bumpers to the health of each of them, sung in a style altogether extravagant, related stories at which he laughed immoderately, and poured forth extemporaneous verses, which would not have been thought bad but for the strange grimaces with which they were uttered. In a word his loquacity was equal to that of a hundred astrologers, he ate as much as a hundred porters, and caroused in proportion.

The Caliph, notwithstanding the table had been thirty times covered, found himself incommoded by the voraciousness of his guest, who was now considerably declined in the prince's esteem. Vathek however, being unwilling to betray the chagrin he could hardly disguise, said in a whisper to Bababalouk, the chief of his eunuchs: "You see how enormous

his performances in every way are, what would be the consequence should he get at my wives! Go! redouble your vigilance, and be sure look well to my Circassians, who would be more to his taste than all of the rest."

The bird of the morning had thrice renewed his song when the hour of the Divan sounded. Vathek in gratitude to his subjects having promised to attend, immediately arose from table and repaired thither, leaning upon his vizir, who could scarcely support him, so disordered was the poor Prince by the wine he had drunk, and still more by the extravagant vagaries of his boisterous guest.

The vizirs, the officers of the crown and of the law, arranged themselves in a semicircle about their sovereign and preserved a respectful silence, whilst the Indian, who looked as cool as if come from a fast, sat down without ceremony on the step of the throne, laughing in his sleeve at the indignation with which his temerity had filled the spectators.

The Caliph however whose ideas were confused and his head embarrassed, went on administering justice at hap-hazard, till at length the prime vizir, perceiving his situation, hit upon a sudden expedient to interrupt the audience and rescue the honour of his master, to whom he said in a whisper: "My Lord, the

Princess Carathis, who hath passed the night in consulting the planets, informs you that they portend you evil, and the danger is urgent. Beware lest this stranger, whom you have so lavishly recompensed for his magical gewgaws, should make some attempt on your life; his liquor, which at first had the appearance of effecting your cure, may be no more than a poison of a sudden operation. Slight not this surmise, ask him at least of what it was compounded, whence he procured it, and mention the sabres which you seem to have forgotten."

Vathek, to whom the insolent airs of the stranger became every moment less supportable, intimated to his vizir by a wink of acquiescence that he would adopt his advice, and at once turning towards the Indian said: "Get up, and declare in full Divan of what drugs the liquor was compounded you enjoined me to take, for it is suspected to be poison; add also the explanation I have so earnestly desired concerning the sabres you sold me, and thus show your gratitude for the favours heaped on you."

Having pronounced these words in as moderate a tone as a caliph well could, he waited in silent expectation for an answer. But the Indian, still keeping his seat, began to renew his loud shouts of laughter, and exhibit the

same horrid grimaces he had shown them before, without vouchsafing a word in reply. Vathek, no longer able to brook such insolence, immediately kicked him from the steps; instantly descending, repeated his blow, and persisted with such assiduity as incited all who were present to follow his example. Every foot was aimed at the Indian, and no sooner had any one given him a kick than he felt himself constrained to reiterate the stroke.

The stranger afforded them no small entertainment; for, being both short and plump, he collected himself into a ball, and rolled round on all sides at the blows of his assailants, who pressed after him wherever he turned with an eagerness beyond conception, whilst their numbers were every moment increasing. The ball indeed, in passing from one apartment to another, drew every person after it that came in its way, insomuch that the whole palace was thrown into confusion, and resounded with a tremendous clamour. The women of the harem, amazed at the uproar, flew to their blinds to discover the cause; but no sooner did they catch a glimpse of the ball than, feeling themselves unable to refrain, they broke from the clutches of their eunuchs, who to stop their flight pinched them till they bled, but in vain; whilst themselves, though trembling with

terror at the escape of their charge, were as incapable of resisting the attraction.

The Indian, after having traversed the halls, galleries, chambers, kitchens, gardens and stables of the palace, at last took his course through the courts; whilst the Caliph, pursuing him closer than the rest, bestowed as many kicks as he possibly could, yet not without receiving now and then one, which his competitors in their eagerness designed for the ball.

Carathis, Morakanabad, and two or three old vizirs, whose wisdom had hitherto withstood the attraction, wishing to prevent Vathek from exposing himself in the presence of his subjects, fell down in his way to impede the pursuit; but he, regardless of their obstruction, leaped over their heads and went on as before. They then ordered the Muezins to call the people to prayers, both for the sake of getting them out of the way, and of endeavouring by their petitions to avert the calamity; but neither of these expedients was a whit more successful; the sight of this fatal ball was alone sufficient to draw after it every beholder. The Muezins themselves, though they saw it but at a distance, hastened down from their minarets and mixed with the crowd, which continued to increase in so surprising a manner, that scarce an inhabitant was left in Samarah, except the

aged, the sick confined to their beds, and infants at the breast, whose nurses could run more nimbly without them. Even Carathis, Morakanabad, and the rest were all become of the party.

The shrill screams of the females, who had broken from their apartments and were unable to extricate themselves from the pressure of the crowd, together with those of the eunuchs jostling after them, terrified lest their charge should escape from their sight, increased by the execrations of husbands urging forward and menacing both, kicks given and received, stumblings and overthrows at every step; in a word, the confusion that universally prevailed rendered Samarah like a city taken by storm and devoted to absolute plunder.

At last the cursed Indian, who still preserved his rotundity of figure, after passing through all the streets and public places, and leaving them empty, rolled onwards to the plain of Catoul, and traversed the valley at the foot of the mountain of the Four Fountains.

As a continual fall of water had excavated an immense gulf in the valley, whose opposite side was closed in by a steep acclivity, the Caliph and his attendants were apprehensive lest the ball should bound into the chasm, and, to prevent it, redoubled their efforts, but in

vain. The Indian persevered in his onward direction, and, as had been apprehended, glancing from the precipice with the rapidity of lightning, was lost in the gulf below.

Vathek would have followed the perfidious Giaour, had not an invisible agency arrested his progress. The multitude that pressed after him were at once checked in the same manner, and a calm instantaneously ensued. They all gazed at each other with an air of astonishment; and, notwithstanding that the loss of veils and turbans, together with torn habits and dust blended with sweat, presented a most laughable spectacle, there was not one smile to be seen; on the contrary all, with looks of confusion and sadness, returned in silence to Samarah and retired to their inmost apartments, without ever reflecting that they had been impelled by an invisible power into the extravagance for which they reproached themselves; for it is but just that men, who so often arrogate to their own merit the good of which they are but instruments, should attribute to themselves the absurdities which they could not prevent.

The Caliph was the only person that refused to leave the valley. He commanded his tents to be pitched there, and stationed himself on the very edge of the precipice, in spite of the

representations of Carathis and Morakanabad, who pointed out the hazard of its brink giving way, and the vicinity to the Magician that had so severely tormented him. Vathek derided all their remonstrances, and, having ordered a thousand flambeaus to be lighted, and directed his attendants to proceed in lighting more, lay down on the slippery margin and attempted, by help of this artificial splendour, to look through that gloom which all the fires of the empyrean had been insufficient to pervade. One while he fancied to himself voices arising from the depth of the gulf; at another he seemed to distinguish the accents of the Indian, but all was no more than hollow murmur of waters, and the din of the cataracts that rushed from steep to steep down the sides of the mountain.

Having passed the night in this cruel perturbation, the Caliph at day-break retired to his tent, where, without taking the least sustenance, he continued to doze till the dusk of evening began again to come on. He then resumed his vigils as before, and persevered in observing them for many nights together. At length, fatigued with so successless an employment, he sought relief from change. To this end he sometimes paced with hasty strides across the plain, and, as he wildly

gazed at the stars, reproached them with having deceived him; but lo! on a sudden the clear blue sky appeared streaked over with streams of blood, which reached from the valley even to the city of Samarah. As this awful phenomenon seemed to touch his tower, Vathek at first thought of repairing thither to view it more distinctly, but feeling himself unable to advance, and being overcome with apprehension, he muffled up his face in his robe.

Terrifying as these prodigies were, this impression upon him was no more than momentary, and served only to stimulate his love of the marvellous. Instead therefore of returning to his palace, he persisted in the resolution of abiding where the Indian vanished from his view. One night, however, while he was walking as usual on the plain, the moon and the stars at once were eclipsed, and a total darkness ensued, the earth trembled beneath him, and a voice came forth, the voice of the Giaour, who, in accents more sonorous than thunder, thus addressed him: "Wouldest thou devote thyself to me? Adore then the terrestrial influences, and abjure Mahomet. On these conditions I will bring thee to the palace of subterranean fire; there shalt thou behold in immense depositories the treasures which the

stars have promised thee, and which will be conferred by those Intelligences whom thou shalt thus render propitious. It was from thence I brought my sabres, and it is there that Soliman Ben Daoud reposes, surrounded by the talismans that control the world."

The astonished Caliph trembled as he answered, yet in a style that showed him to be no novice in preternatural adventures: "Where art thou? be present to my eyes; dissipate the gloom that perplexes me, and of which I deem thee the cause; after the many flambeaus I have burnt to discover thee, thou mayst at least grant a glimpse of thy horrible visage."

"Abjure then Mahomet," replied the Indian, "and promise me full proofs of thy sincerity, otherwise thou shalt never behold me again."

The unhappy Caliph, instigated by insatiable curiosity, lavished his promises in the utmost profusion. The sky immediately brightened; and by the light of the planets, which seemed almost to blaze, Vathek beheld the earth open, and at the extremity of a vast black chasm, a portal of ebony, before which stood the Indian, still blacker, holding in his hand a golden key that caused the lock to resound.

"How," cried Vathek, "can I descend to thee without the certainty of breaking my

neck? come take me, and instantly open the portal."

"Not so fast," replied the Indian, "impatient Caliph! Know that I am parched with thirst, and cannot open this door till my thirst be thoroughly appeased. I require the blood of fifty of the most beautiful sons of thy vizirs and great men, or neither can my thirst nor thy curiosity be satisfied. Return to Samarah, procure for me this necessary libation, come back hither, throw it thyself into this chasm, and then shalt thou see!"

Having thus spoken the Indian turned his back on the Caliph, who, incited by the suggestion of demons, resolved on the direful sacrifice. He now pretended to have regained his tranquillity, and set out for Samarah amidst the acclamations of a people who still loved him, and forebore not to rejoice when they believed him to have recovered his reason. So successfully did he conceal the emotion of his heart, that even Carathis and Morakanabad were equally deceived with the rest. Nothing was heard of but festivals and rejoicings; the ball, which no tongue had hitherto ventured to mention, was again brought on the tapis; a general laugh went round, though many, still smarting under the hands of the surgeon from the hurts received in that memorable adventure, had no *great reason* for mirth.

The prevalence of this gay humour was not a little grateful to Vathek, as perceiving how much it conduced to his project. He put on the appearance of affability to every one, but especially to his vizirs, and the grandees of his court, whom he failed not to regale with a sumptuous banquet, during which he insensibly inclined the conversation to the children of his guests. Having asked with a good-natured air who of them were blessed with the handsomest boys, every father at once asserted the pretensions of his own, and the contest imperceptibly grew so warm that nothing could have withholden them from coming to blows but their profound reverence for the person of the Caliph. Under the pretence therefore of reconciling the disputants, Vathek took upon him to decide; and with this view commanded the boys to be brought.

It was not long before a troop of these poor children made their appearance, all equipped by their fond mothers with such ornaments as might give the greatest relief to their beauty, or most advantageously display the graces of their age. But whilst this brilliant assemblage attracted the eyes and hearts of every one besides, the Caliph scrutinized each in his turn with a malignant avidity that passed for attention, and selected from their number the fifty whom he judged the Giaour would prefer.

With an equal show of kindness as before, he proposed to celebrate a festival on the plain for the entertainment of his young favourites, who he said ought to rejoice still more than all at the restoration of his health, on account of the favours he intended for them.

The Caliph's proposal was received with the greatest delight, and soon published through Samarah; litters, camels, and horses were prepared. Women and children, old men and young, every one placed himself in the station he chose. The cavalcade set forward, attended by all the confectioners in the city and its precincts; the populace following on foot composed an amazing crowd, and occasioned no little noise; all was joy, nor did any one call to mind what most of them had suffered when they first travelled the road they were now passing so gaily.

The evening was serene, the air refreshing, the sky clear, and the flowers exhaled their fragrance; the beams of the declining sun, whose mild splendour reposed on the summit of the mountain, shed a glow of ruddy light over its green declivity and the white flocks sporting upon it; no sounds were audible, save the murmurs of the Four Fountains, and the reeds and voices of shepherds, calling to each other from different eminences.

The lovely innocents proceeding to the destined sacrifice added not a little to the hilarity of the scene; they approached the plain full of sportiveness, some coursing butterflies, others culling flowers, or picking up the shining little pebbles that attracted their notice. At intervals they nimbly started from each other, for the sake of being caught again and mutually imparting a thousand caresses.

The dreadful chasm, at whose bottom the portal of ebony was placed, began to appear at a distance; it looked like a black streak that divided the plain. Morakanabad and his companions took it for some work which the Caliph had ordered; unhappy men! little did they surmise for what it was destined.

Vathek, not liking they should examine it too nearly, stopped the procession, and ordered a spacious circle to be formed on this side, at some distance from the accursed chasm. The body-guard of eunuchs was detached to measure out the lists intended for the games, and prepare ringles for the lines to keep off the crowd. The fifty competitors were soon stripped, and presented to the admiration of the spectators the suppleness and grace of their delicate limbs; their eyes sparkled with a joy which those of their fond parents reflected. Every one offered wishes for the little candi-

date nearest his heart, and doubted not of his being victorious; a breathless suspense awaited the contest of these amiable and innocent victims.

The Caliph, availing himself of the first moment to retire from the crowd, advanced towards the chasm, and there heard, yet not without shuddering, the voice of the Indian, who, gnashing his teeth, eagerly demanded: "Where are they? where are they? perceivest thou not how my mouth waters?"

"Relentless Giaour!" answered Vathek with emotion, "can nothing content thee but the massacre of these lovely victims? Ah! wert thou to behold their beauty it must certainly move thy compassion."

"Perdition on thy compassion, babbler!" cried the Indian; "Give them me, instantly give them, or my portal shall be closed against thee for ever!"

"Not so loudly," replied the Caliph, blushing.

"I understand thee," returned the Giaour with the grin of an ogre; "thou wantest to summon up more presence of mind; I will for a moment forbear."

During this exquisite dialogue the games went forward with all alacrity, and at length concluded just as the twilight began to over-

cast the mountains. Vathek, who was still standing on the edge of the chasm, called out, with all his might: "Let my fifty little favourites approach me separately, and let them come in the order of their success. To the first I will give my diamond bracelet, to the second my collar of emeralds, to the third my aigret of rubies, to the fourth my girdle of topazes, and to the rest each a part of my dress, even down to my slippers."

This declaration was received with reiterated acclamations, and all extolled the liberality of a Prince who would thus strip himself for the amusement of his subjects and the encouragement of the rising generation.

The Caliph in the meanwhile undressed himself by degrees, and, raising his arm as high as he was able, made each of the prizes glitter in the air; but whilst he delivered it with one hand to the child, who sprung forward to receive it, he with the other pushed the poor innocent into the gulf, where the Giaour with a sullen muttering incessantly repeated, "More! more!"

This dreadful device was executed with so much dexterity, that the boy who was approaching him remained unconscious of the fate of his forerunner; and as to spectators, the shades of evening, together with their distance,

precluded them from perceiving any object distinctly. Vathek, having in this manner thrown in the last of the fifty, and expecting that the Giaour, on receiving them would have presented the key, already fancied himself as great as Soliman, and consequently above being amenable for what he had done: when, to his utter amazement, the chasm closed, and the ground became as entire as the rest of the plain.

No language could express his rage and despair. He execrated the perfidy of the Indian, loaded him with the most infamous invectives, and stamped with his foot as resolving to be heard; he persisted in this demeanour till his strength failed him, and then fell on the earth like one void of sense. His vizirs and grandees, who were nearer than the rest, supposed him at first to be sitting on the grass at play with their amiable children; but at length prompted by doubt, they advanced towards the spot and found the Caliph alone, who wildly demanded what they wanted?

"Our children! our children!" cried they.

"It is assuredly pleasant," said he, "to make me accountable for accidents; your children while at play fell from the precipice that was here, and I should have experienced their fate had I not been saved by a sudden start back."

At these words the fathers of the fifty boys cried out aloud, the mothers repeated their exclamations an octave higher, whilst the rest, without knowing the cause, soon drowned the voices of both with still louder lamentations of their own.

"Our Caliph," said they, and the report soon circulated, "Our Caliph has played us this trick to gratify his accursed Giaour. Let us punish him for his perfidy! let us avenge ourselves! let us avenge the blood of the innocent! let us throw this cruel Prince into the gulf that is near, and let his name be mentioned no more!"

At this rumour and these menaces, Carathis, full of consternation, hastened to Morakanabad and said: "Vizir, you have lost two beautiful boys, and must necessarily be the most afflicted of fathers, but you are virtuous, save your master."

"I will brave every hazard," replied the vizir, "to rescue him from his present danger, but afterwards will abandon him to his fate. Bababalouk," continued he, "put yourself at the head of your eunuchs; disperse the mob, and, if possible, bring back this unhappy Prince to his palace." Bababalouk and his fraternity, felicitating each other in a low voice on their disability of ever being fathers, obeyed the

mandate of the vizir; who, seconding their exertions to the utmost of his power, at length accomplished his generous enterprise, and retired as he resolved to lament at his leisure.

No sooner had the Caliph re-entered his palace than Carathis commanded the doors to be fastened; but, perceiving the tumult to be still violent, and hearing the imprecation which resounded from all quarters, she said to her son: "Whether the populace be right or wrong, it behoves you to provide for your safety; let us retire to your own apartment, and from thence through the subterranean passage, known only to ourselves, into your tower; there, with the assistance of the mutes who never leave it, we may be able to make some resistance. Bababalouk, supposing us to be still in the palace, will guard its avenues for his own sake; and we shall soon find, without the counsels of that blubberer Morakanabad, what expedient may be the best to adopt.

Vathek, without making the least reply, acquiesced in his mother's proposal, and repeated as he went: "Nefarious Giaour! where art thou? hast thou not yet devoured those poor children? where are thy sabres? thy golden key? thy talismans?"

Carathis, who guessed from these interrogations a part of the truth, had no difficulty to

apprehend in getting at the whole, as soon as he should be a little composed in his tower. This Princess was so far from being influenced by scruples, that she was as wicked as woman could be, which is not saying a little, for the sex pique themselves on their superiority in every competition. The recital of the Caliph, therefore, occasioned neither terror nor surprise to his mother; she felt no emotion but from the promises of the Giaour, and said to her son: "This Giaour, it must be confessed, is somewhat sanguinary in his taste, but the terrestrial powers are always terrible; nevertheless, what the one hath promised and the others can confer will prove a sufficient indemnification; no crimes should be thought too dear for such a reward; forbear then to revile the Indian; you have not fulfilled the conditions to which his services are annexed; for instance, is not a sacrifice to the subterranean Genii required? and should we not be prepared to offer it as soon as the tumult is subsided? This charge I will take on myself, and have no doubt of succeeding by means of your treasures, which, as there are now so many others in store, may without fear be exhausted."

Accordingly the Princess, who possessed the most consummate skill in the art of persuasion, went immediately back through the subter-

ranean passage; and, presenting herself to the populace from a window of the palace, began to harangue them with all the address of which she was mistress, whilst Bababalouk showered money from both hands amongst the crowd, who by these united means were soon appeased; every person retired to his home and Carathis returned to the tower.

Prayer at break of day was announced, when Carathis and Vathek ascended the steps which led to the summit of the tower, where they remained for some time, though the weather was lowering and wet. This impending gloom corresponded with their malignant dispositions; but when the sun began to break through the clouds they ordered a pavilion to be raised, as a screen from the intrusion of his beams. The Caliph, overcome with fatigue, sought refreshment from repose, at the same time hoping that significant dreams might attend on his slumbers; whilst the indefatigable Carathis, followed by a party of her mutes, descended to prepare whatever she judged proper for the oblation of the approaching night.

By secret stairs, known only to herself and to her son, she first repaired to the mysterious recesses in which were deposited the mummies that had been brought from the catacombs of the ancient Pharaohs; of these she ordered sev-

eral to be taken. From thence she resorted to a gallery where, under the guard of fifty female negroes, mute and blind of the right eye, were preserved the oil of the most venomous serpents, rhinoceros' horns, and woods of a subtile and penetrating odour procured from the interior of the Indies, together with a thousand other horrible rarities. This collection had been formed for a purpose like the present by Carathis herself, from a presentiment that she might one day enjoy some intercourse with the infernal powers to whom she had ever been passionately attached, and to whose taste she was no stranger.

To familiarize herself the better with the horrors in view, the Princess remained in the company of her negresses, who squinted in the most amiable manner from the only eye they had, and leered with exquisite delight at the skulls and skeletons which Carathis had drawn forth from her cabinets, whose keys she intrusted to no one; all of them making contortions, and uttering a frightful jargon, but very amusing to the Princess, till at last being stunned by their gibbering, and suffocated by the potency of their exhalations, she was forced to quit the gallery, after stripping it of a part of its treasures.

Whilst she was thus occupied the Caliph,

who instead of the visions he expected had acquired in these insubstantial regions a voracious appetite, was greatly provoked at the negresses; for, having totally forgotten their deafness, he had impatiently asked them for food, and seeing them regardless of his demand, he began to cuff, pinch, and push them, till Carathis arrived to terminate a scene so indecent, to the great content of these miserable creatures, who, having been brought up by her, understood all her signs, and communicated in the same way their thoughts in return.

"Son! what means all this?" said she, panting for breath. "I thought I heard as I came up, the shrieks of a thousand bats tearing from their crannies in the recesses of a cavern; and it was the outcry only of these poor mutes, whom you were so unmercifully abusing. In truth you but ill deserve the admirable provision I have brought you."

"Give it me instantly," exclaimed the Caliph; "I am perishing for hunger!"

"As to that," answered she, "you must have an excellent stomach, if it can digest what I have been preparing."

"Be quick," replied the Caliph; "but, oh heavens! what horrors! what do you intend?"

"Come, come," returned Carathis, "be not so squeamish, but help me to arrange every-

thing properly, and you shall see that what you reject with such symptoms of disgust will soon complete your felicity. Let us get ready the pile for the sacrifice of to-night, and think not of eating till that is performed; know you not that all solemn rites are preceded by a rigorous abstinence?"

The Caliph, not daring to object, abandoned himself to grief and the wind that ravaged his entrails, whilst his mother went forward with the requisite operations. Phials of serpents' oil, mummies and bones were soon set in order on the balustrade of the tower; the pile began to rise, and in three hours was as many cubits high. At length darkness approached, and Carathis, having stripped herself to her inmost garment, clapped her hands in an impulse of ecstasy and struck light with all her force. The mutes followed her example; but Vathek, extenuated with hunger and impatience, was unable to support himself, and fell down in a swoon. The sparks had already kindled the dry wood, the venomous oil burst into a thousand blue flames, the mummies dissolving emitted a thick dun vapour, and the rhinoceros's horns beginning to consume, all together diffused such a stench, that the Caliph recovering started from his trance, and gazed wildly on the

scene in full blaze around him. The oil gushed forth in a plentitude of streams; and the negresses, who supplied it without intermission, united their cries to those of the Princess. At last the fire became so violent, and the flames reflected from the polished marble so dazzling, that the Caliph, unable to withstand the heat and the blaze, effected his escape, and clambered up the imperial standard.

In the meantime the inhabitants of Samarah, scared at the light which shone over the city, arose in haste, ascended their roofs, beheld the tower on fire, and hurried half naked to the square. Their love to their Sovereign immediately awoke; and, apprehending him in danger of perishing in his tower, their whole thoughts were occupied with the means of his safety. Morakanabad flew from his retirement, wiped away his tears, and cried out for water like the rest. Bababalouk, whose olfactory nerves were more familiarized to magical odours, readily conjecturing that Carathis was engaged in her favourite amusements, strenuously exhorted them not to be alarmed. Him however they treated as an old poltroon, and forbore not to style him a rascally traitor. The camels and dromedaries were advancing with water, but no one

knew by which way to enter the tower. Whilst the populace was obstinate in forcing the doors, a violent east wind drove such a volume of flame against them, as at first forced them off, but afterwards rekindled their zeal; at the same time the stench of the horns and mummies increasing, most of the crowd fell backward in a state of suffocation; those that kept their feet mutually wondered at the cause of the smell, and admonished each other to retire. Morakanabad, more sick than the rest, remained in a piteous condition; holding his nose with one hand, he persisted in his efforts with the other, to burst open the doors and obtain admission. A hundred and forty of the strongest and most resolute at length accomplished their purpose; having gained the staircase by their violent exertions, they attained a great height in a quarter of an hour.

Carathis, alarmed at the signs of her mutes, advanced to the staircase, went down a few steps, and heard several voices calling out from below: "You shall in a moment have water!" Being rather alert, considering her age, she presently regained the top of the tower, and bade her son suspend the sacrifice for some minutes, adding: "We shall soon be enabled to render it more grateful; certain

dolts of your subjects, imagining no doubt that we were on fire, have been rash enough to break through those doors which had hitherto remained inviolate, for the sake of bringing up water; they are very kind, you must allow, so soon to forget the wrongs you have done them, but that is of little moment. Let us offer them to the Giaour; let them come up; our mutes, who neither want strength nor experience, will soon dispatch them, exhausted as they are with fatigue."

"Be it so," answered the Caliph, "provided we finish and I dine."

In fact these good people, out of breath from ascending eleven thousand stairs in such haste, and chagrined at having spilt by the way the water they had taken, were no sooner arrived at the top than the blaze of the flames and the fumes of the mummies at once overpowered their senses. It was a pity! for they beheld not the agreeable smile with which the mutes and the negresses adjusted the cord to their necks; these amiable personages rejoiced, however, no less at the scene; never before had the ceremony of strangling been performed with so much facility; they all fell without the least resistance or struggle, so that Vathek in the space of a few moments found himself surrounded by the dead bodies

of his faithfullest subjects, all which were thrown on the top of the pile.

Carathis, whose presence of mind never forsook her, perceiving that she had carcasses sufficient to complete her oblation, commanded the chains to be stretched across the staircase, and the iron doors barricadoed, that no more might come up.

No sooner were these orders obeyed than the tower shook, the dead bodies vanished in the flames, which at once changed from a swarthy crimson to a bright rose colour; an ambient vapour emitted the most exquisite fragrance, the marble columns rang with harmonious sounds and the liquefied horns diffused a delicious perfume. Carathis, in transports, anticipated the success of her enterprise, whilst her mutes and negresses, to whom these sweets had given the colic, retired to their cells grumbling.

Scarcely were they gone when, instead of the pile, horns, mummies and ashes, the Caliph both saw and felt, with a degree of pleasure which he could not express, a table covered with the most magnificent repast; flagons of wine, and vases of exquisite sherbet floating on snow. He availed himself without scruple of such an entertainment, and had already laid hands on a lamb stuffed with

pistachios, whilst Carathis was privately drawing from a filigree urn a parchment that seemed to be endless; and which had escaped the notice of her son; totally occupied in gratifying an importunate appetite, he left her to peruse it without interruption, which having finished, she said to him in an authoritative tone, "Put an end to your gluttony, and hear the splendid promises with which you are favoured!" She then read as follows: "Vathek, my well-beloved, thou hast surpassed my hopes; my nostrils have been regaled by the savour of thy mummies, thy horns, and still more by the lives devoted on the pile. At the full of the moon cause the bands of thy musicians and thy tymbals to be heard; depart from thy palace surrounded by all the pageants of majesty; thy most faithful slaves, thy best beloved wives, thy most magnificent litters, thy richest loaden camels, and set forward on thy way to Istakhar; there await I thy coming, that is the region of wonders; there shalt thou receive the diadem of Gian Ben Gian, the talismans of Soliman, and the treasures of the Preadamite Sultans; there shalt thou be solaced with all kinds of delight. But beware how thou enterest any dwelling on thy route, or thou shalt feel the effects of my anger."

The Caliph, who, notwithstanding his habitual luxury, had never before dined with so much satisfaction, gave full scope to the joy of these golden tidings, and betook himself to drinking anew. Carathis, whose antipathy to wine was by no means insuperable, failed not to supply a reason for every bumper, which they ironically quaffed to the health of Mahomet. This infernal liquor completed their impious temerity, and prompted them to utter a profusion of blasphemies; they gave a loose rein to their wit at the expense of the ass of Balaam, the dog of the seven sleepers, and the other animals admitted into the paradise of Mahomet. In this sprightly humour they descended the eleven thousand stairs, diverting themselves as they went at the anxious faces they saw on the square through the oilets of the tower, and at length arrived at the royal apartments by the subterranean passage. Bababalouk was parading to and fro, and issuing his mandates with great pomp to the eunuchs, who were snuffing the lights and painting the eyes of the Circassians. No sooner did he catch sight of the Caliph and his Mother than he exclaimed, "Hah! you have then, I perceive, escaped from the flames; I was not however altogether out of doubt."

"Of what moment is it to us what you

thought, or think?" cried Carathis; "go, speed, tell Morakanabad that we immediately want him; and take care how you stop by the way to make your insipid reflections."

Morakanabad delayed not to obey the summons, and was received by Vathek and his mother with great solemnity; they told him, with an air of composure and commiseration, that the fire at the top of the tower was extinguished; but that it had cost the lives of the brave people who sought to assist them.

"Still more misfortunes!" cried Morakanabad, with a sigh. "Ah, Commander of the faithful, our holy Prophet is certainly irritated against us! it behoves you to appease him."

"We will appease him hereafter!" replied the Caliph, with a smile that augured nothing of good. "You will have leisure sufficient for your supplications during my absence; for this country is the bane of my health. I am disgusted with the mountain of the Four Fountains, and am resolved to go and drink of the stream of Rocnabad; I long to refresh myself in the delightful valleys which it waters. Do you, with the advice of my mother, govern my dominions, and take care to supply whatever her experiments may demand; for you well know that our tower

abounds in materials for the advancement of science."

The tower but ill suited Morakanabad's taste. Immense treasures had been lavished upon it; and nothing had he ever seen carried thither but female negroes, mutes and abominable drugs. Nor did he know well what to think of Carathis; who, like a cameleon, could assume all possible colours; her cursed eloquence had often driven the poor mussulman to his last shifts. He considered, however, that if she possessed but few good qualities, her son had still fewer; and that the alternative on the whole would be in her favour. Consoled, therefore, with this reflection, he went in good spirits to soothe the populace, and make the proper arrangements for his master's journey.

Vathek, to conciliate the Spirits of the subterranean palace, resolved that his expedition should be uncommonly splendid. With this view he confiscated on all sides the property of his subjects, whilst his worthy mother stripped the seraglios she visited of the gems they contained. She collected all the sempstresses and embroiderers of Samarah and other cities to the distance of sixty leagues, to prepare pavilions, palanquins, sofas, canopies and litters for the train of the Monarch.

There was not left in Masulipatan a single piece of chintz, and so much muslin had been bought up to dress out Bababalouk and the other black eunuchs, that there remained not an ell in the whole Irak of Babylon.

During these preparations Carathis, who never lost sight of her great object, which was to obtain favour with the Powers of darkness, made select parties of the fairest and most delicate ladies of the city; but in the midst of their gaiety she contrived to introduce serpents amongst them, and to break pots of scorpions, under the table; they all bit to a wonder; and Carathis would have left them to bite, were it not that, to fill up the time, she now and then amused herself in curing their wounds with an excellent anodyne of her own invention, for this good Princess abhorred being indolent.

Vathek, who was not altogether so active as his mother, devoted his time to the sole gratification of his senses, in the palaces which were severally dedicated to them; he disgusted himself no more with the Divan or the Mosque. One half of Samarah followed his example, whilst the other lamented the progress of corruption.

In the midst of these transactions, the embassy returned which had been sent in pious

times to Mecca. It consisted of the most reverend Moullahs, who had fulfilled their commission and brought back one of those precious besoms which are used to sweep the sacred Caaba; a present truly worthy of the greatest potentate on earth!

The Caliph happened at this instant to be engaged in an apartment by no means adapted to the reception of embassies, though adorned with a certain magnificence, not only to render it agreeable, but also because he resorted to it frequently, and stayed a considerable time together. Whilst occupied in this retreat, he heard the voice of Bababalouk calling out from between the door and the tapestry that hung before it: "Here are the excellent Mahomet Ebn Edris al Shafei, and the seraphic Al Mouhadethin, who have brought the besom from Mecca, and with tears of joy intreat they may present it to your majesty in person."

"Let them bring the besom hither; it may be of use," said Vathek, who was still employed, not having quite racked off his wine.

"How!" answered Bababalouk, half aloud and amazed.

"Obey," replied the Caliph, "for it is my sovereign will; go instantly, vanish; for here

will I receive the good folk, who have thus filled thee with joy."

The eunuch departed muttering, and bade the venerable train attend him. A sacred rapture was diffused amongst these reverend old men. Though fatigued with the length of their expedition, they followed Bababalouk with an alertness almost miraculous, and felt themselves highly flattered, as they swept along the stately porticoes, that the Caliph would not receive them like ambassadors in ordinary in his hall of audience. Soon reaching the interior of the harem (where, through blinds of persian, they perceived large soft eyes, dark and blue, that went and came like lightning) penetrated with respect and wonder, and full of their celestial mission, they advanced in procession towards the small corridors that appeared to terminate in nothing, but nevertheless led to the cell where the Caliph expected their coming.

"What! is the commander of the faithful sick?" said Ebn Edris al Shafei in a low voice to his companion.

"I rather think he is in his oratory," answered Al Mouhadethin.

Vathek, who heard the dialogue, cried out: "What imports it you how I am employed? approach without delay."

They advanced, and Bababalouk almost sunk with confusion, whilst the Caliph, without showing himself, put forth his hand from behind the tapestry that hung before the door, and demanded of them the besom. Having prostrated themselves as well as the corridor would permit, and even in a tolerable semicircle, the venerable Al Shafei, drawing forth the besom from the embroidered and perfumed scarves in which it had been enveloped, and secured from the profane gaze of vulgar eyes, arose from his associates, and advanced with an air of the most awful solemnity, towards the supposed oratory; but with what astonishment! with what horror was he seized! Vathek bursting out into a villanous laugh, snatched the besom from his trembling hand, and, fixing upon some cobwebs that hung suspended from the ceiling, gravely brushed away till not a single one remained. The old men, overpowered with amazement, were unable to lift their beards from the ground; for, as Vathek had carelessly left the tapestry between them half drawn, they were witnesses to the whole transaction; their tears gushed forth on the marble, Al Mouhadethin swooned through mortification and fatigue, whilst the Caliph, throwing himself backward on his seat, shouted and clapped his hands

without mercy. At last, addressing himself to Bababalouk: "My dear black," said he, "go, regale these pious poor souls with my good wine from Shiraz; and, as they can boast of having seen more of my palace than any one besides let them also visit my office courts, and lead them out by the back steps that go to my stables." Having said this he threw the besom in their face, and went to enjoy the laugh with Carathis. Bababalouk did all in his power to console the ambassadors, but the two most infirm expired on the spot; the rest were carried to their beds, from whence, being heart-broken with sorrow and shame, they never arose.

The succeeding night Vathek attended by his mother ascended the tower to see if everything were ready for his journey; for he had great faith in the influence of the stars. The planets appeared in their most favourable aspects. The Caliph, to enjoy so flattering a sight, supped gaily on the roof, and fancied that he heard during his repast loud shouts of laughter resound through the sky, in a manner that inspired the fullest assurance.

All was in motion at the palace; lights were kept burning through the whole of the night; the sound of implements and of artisans finishing their work, the voices of women and

their guardians who sung at their embroidery, all conspired to interrupt the stillness of nature and infinitely delight the heart of Vathek, who imagined himself going in triumph to sit upon the throne of Soliman.

The people were not less satisfied than himself, all assisted to accelerate the moment which should rescue them from the wayward caprices of so extravagant a master.

The day preceding the departure of this infatuated Prince was employed by Carathis in repeating to him the decrees of the mysterious parchment, which she had thoroughly gotten by heart, and in recommending him not to enter the habitation of any one by the way; "for well thou knowest," added she, "how liquorish thy taste is after good dishes and young damsels; let me, therefore, enjoin thee to be content with thy old cooks, who are the best in the world, and not to forget that in thy ambulatory seraglio there are three dozen pretty faces, which Bababalouk hath not yet unveiled. I myself have a great desire to watch over thy conduct, and visit the subterranean palace, which no doubt contains whatever can interest persons like us; there is nothing so pleasing as retiring to caverns; my taste for dead bodies and every thing like mummy is decided, and I am confident thou

wilt see the most exquisite of their kind. Forget me not then, but the moment thou art in possession of the talismans which are to open to thee the mineral kingdoms and the centre of the earth itself, fail not to dispatch some trusty genius to take me and my cabinet, for the oil of the serpents I have pinched to death will be a pretty present to the Giaour, who cannot but be charmed with such dainties."

Scarcely had Carathis ended this edifying discourse when the sun, setting behind the mountain of the Four Fountains, gave place to the rising moon; this planet being that evening at full appeared of unusual beauty and magnitude in the eyes of the women, the eunuchs and the pages, who were all impatient to set forward. The city re-echoed with shouts of joy and flourishing of trumpets; nothing was visible but plumes nodding on pavilions, and aigrets shining in the mild lustre of the moon; the spacious square resembled an immense parterre, variegated with the most stately tulips of the East.

Arrayed in the robes which were only worn at the most distinguished ceremonials, and supported by his Vizir and Bababalouk, the Caliph descended the grand staircase of the tower in the sight of all his people; he could not forbear pausing at intervals to admire the

superb appearance which every where courted his view, whilst the whole multitude, even to the camels with their sumptuous burthens, knelt down before him. For some time a general stillness prevailed, which nothing happened to disturb but the shrill screams of some eunuchs in the rear; these vigilant guards, having remarked certain cages of the ladies swagging somewhat awry, and discovered that a few adventurous gallants had contrived to get in, soon dislodged the enraptured culprits, and consigned them with good commendations to the surgeons of the serail. The majesty of so magnificent a spectacle was not, however, violated by incidents like these. Vathek meanwhile saluted the moon with an idolatrous air, that neither pleased Morakanabad nor the Doctors of the law, any more than the vizirs and the grandees of his court, who were all assembled to enjoy the last view of their Sovereign.

At length the clarions and trumpets from the top of the tower announced the prelude of departure; though the instruments were in unison with each other, yet a singular dissonance was blended with their sounds; this proceeded from Carathis, who was singing her direful orisons to the Giaour, whilst the negresses and mutes supplied thorough-base

without articulating a word. The good Mussulmans fancied that they heard the sullen hum of those nocturnal insects which presage evil, and importuned Vathek to beware how he ventured his sacred person.

On a given signal the great standard of the Califat was displayed, twenty thousand lances shone around it, and the Caliph, treading loyally on the cloth of gold which had been spread for his feet, ascended his litter amidst the general awe that possessed his subjects.

The expedition commenced with the utmost order and so entire a silence, that even the locusts were heard from the thickets on the plain of Catoul. Gaiety and good-humour prevailing, six good leagues were past before the dawn; and the morning star was still glittering in the firmament when the whole of this numerous train had halted on the banks of the Tigris, where they encamped to repose for the rest of the day.

The three days that followed were spent in the same manner; but on the fourth the heavens looked angry, lightnings broke forth in frequent flashes, re-echoing peals of thunder succeeded, and the trembling Circassians clung with all their might to their ugly guardians. The Caliph himself was greatly inclined to take shelter in the large town of Gul-

chissar, the governor of which came forth to meet him, and tendered every kind of refreshment the place could supply; but, having examined his tablets, he suffered the rain to soak him almost to the bone, notwithstanding the importunity of his first favourites. Though he began to regret the palace of the senses, yet he lost not sight of his enterprise, and his sanguine expectations confirmed his resolution; his geographers were ordered to attend him, but the weather proved so terrible that these poor people exhibited a lamentable appearance: and, as no long journeys had been undertaken since the time of Haroun al Raschid, their maps of the different countries were in a still worse plight than themselves; every one was ignorant which way to turn; for Vathek, though well versed in the course of the heavens, no longer knew his situation on earth; he thundered even louder than the elements, and mutterd forth certain hints of the bow-string, which were not very soothing to literary ears. Disgusted at the toilsome weariness of the way, he determined to cross over the craggy heights and follow the guidance of a peasant, who undertook to bring him in four days to Rocnabad. Remonstrances were all to no purpose; his resolution was fixed, and an invasion commenced on the

province of the goats, who sped away in large troops before them. It was curious to view on these half calcined rocks camels richly caparisoned, and pavilions of gold and silk waving on their summits, which till then had never been covered but with sapless thistles and fern.

The females and eunuchs uttered shrill wailings at the sight of the precipices below them, and the dreary prospects that opened in the vast gorges of the mountains. Before they could reach the ascent of the steepest rock night overtook them, and a boisterous tempest arose which, having rent the awnings of the palanquins and cages, exposed to the raw gusts the poor ladies within, who had never before felt so piercing a cold. The dark clouds that overcast the face of the sky deepened the horrors of this disastrous night, insomuch that nothing could be heard distinctly but the mewling of pages and lamentations of sultanas.

To increase the general misfortune, the frightful uproar of wild beasts resounded at a distance, and there were soon perceived in the forest they were skirting the glaring of eyes which could belong only to devils or tigers. The pioneers, who as well as they could had marked out a track, and a part of the advanced

guard were devoured before they had been in the least apprized of their danger. The confusion that prevailed was extreme; wolves tigers and other carnivorous animals, invited by the howling of their companions, flocked together from every quarter; the crashing of bones was heard on all sides, and a fearful rush of wings overhead, for now vultures also began to be of the party.

The terror at length reached the main body of the troops which surrounded the monarch and his harem, at the distance of two leagues from the scene. Vathek (voluptuously reposed in his capacious litter upon cushions of silk, with two little pages beside him of complexions more fair than the enamel of Franguestan, who were occupied in keeping off flies) was soundly asleep, and contemplating in his dreams the treasures of Soliman. The shrieks however of his wives awoke him with a start, and, instead of the Giaour with his key of gold, he beheld Bababalouk full of consternation.

"Sire," exclaimed this good servant of the most potent of monarchs, "misfortune is arrived at its height; wild beasts, who entertain no more reverence for your sacred person than for that of a dead ass, have beset your camels and their drivers; thirty of the richest

laden are already become their prey, as well as your confectioners, your cooks, and purveyors; and, unless our holy Prophet should protect us, we shall have all eaten our last meal."

At the mention of eating the Caliph lost all patience; he began to bellow and even beat himself (for there was no seeing in the dark). The rumour every instant increased, and Babalouk, finding no good could be done with his master, stopped both his ears against the hurly-burly of the harem, and called out aloud: "Come, ladies and brothers! all hands to work; strike light in a moment! never shall it be said that the Commander of the faithful served to regale these infidel brutes."

Though there wanted not in this bevy of beauties a sufficient number of capricious and wayward, yet on the present occasion they were all compliance; fires were visible in a twinkling in all their cages; ten thousand torches were lighted at once; the Caliph himself seized a large one of wax; every person followed his example, and, by kindling ropes ends dipped in oil and fastened on poles, an amazing blaze was spread. The rocks were covered with the splendour of sunshine; the trails of sparks wafted by the wind communicated to the dry fern, of which there was plenty. Serpents were observed to crawl forth

from their retreats with amazement and hissings, whilst the horses snorted, stamped the ground, tossed their noses in the air, and plunged about without mercy.

One of the forests of cedar that bordered their way took fire, and the branches that overhung the path, extending their flames to the muslins and chintzes which covered the cages of the ladies, obliged them to jump out at the peril of their necks. Vathek, who vented on the occasion a thousand blasphemies, was himself compelled to touch with his sacred feet the naked earth.

Never had such an incident happened before. Full of mortification, shame and despondence, and not knowing how to walk, the ladies fell into the dirt. "Must I go on foot!" said one; "Must I wet my feet!" cried another; "Must I soil my dress!" asked a third; "Execrable Bababalouk!" exclaimed all; "Outcast of hell! what hadst thou to do with torches? Better were it to be eaten by tigers than to fall into our present condition! we are for ever undone! Not a porter is there in the army, nor a currier of camels, but hath seen some part of our bodies, and what is worse, our very faces!" On saying this the most bashful amongst them hid their foreheads on the ground, whilst such as had more

boldness flew at Bababalouk; but he, well apprized of their humour and not wanting in shrewdness, betook himself to his heels along with his comrades, all dropping their torches and striking their tymbals.

It was not less light than in the brightest of the dog-days, and the weather was hot in proportion; but how degrading was the spectacle, to behold the Caliph bespattered like an ordinary mortal! As the exercise of his faculties seemed to be suspended, one of his Ethiopian wives (for he delighted in variety) clasped him in her arms, threw him upon her shoulder like a sack of dates, and, finding that the fire was hemming them in, set off with no small expedition, considering the weight of her burden. The other ladies, who had just learnt the use of their feet, followed her, their guards galloped after, and the camel-drivers brought up the rear as fast as their charge would permit.

They soon reached the spot where the wild beasts had commenced the carnage, and which they had too much spirit to leave, notwithstanding the approaching tumult and the luxurious supper they had made; Bababalouk nevertheless seized on a few of the plumpest, which were unable to budge from the place, and began to flay them with admirable adroit-

ness. The cavalcade being got so far from the conflagration as that the heat felt rather grateful than violent, it was immediately resolved on to halt. The tattered chintzes were picked up, the scraps left by the wolves and tigers interred, and vengeance was taken on some dozens of vultures that were too much glutted to rise on the wing. The camels, which had been left unmolested to make sal ammoniac, being numbered, and the ladies once more enclosed in their cages, the imperial tent was pitched on the levellest ground they could find.

Vathek, reposing upon a mattress of down, and tolerably recovered from the jolting of the Ethiopian, who to his feelings seemed the roughest trotting jade he had hitherto mounted, called out for something to eat. But alas! those delicate cakes which had been baked in silver ovens for his royal mouth, those rich manchets, amber comfits, flagons of Schiraz wine, porcelain vases of snow, and grapes from the banks of the Tigris, were all irremediably lost! And nothing had Bababalouk to present in their stead but a roasted wolf, vultures *à la daube*, aromatic herbs of the most acrid poignancy, rotten truffles, boiled thistles, and such other wild plants as must ulcerate the throat and parch up the tongue. Nor

was he better provided in the article of drink, for he could procure nothing to accompany these irritating viands but a few vials of abominable brandy, which had been secreted by the scullions in their slippers.

Vathek made wry faces at so savage a repast, and Bababalouk answered them with shrugs and contortions; the Caliph however eat with tolerable appetite, and fell into a nap that lasted six hours. The splendour of the sun reflected from the white cliffs of the mountains, in spite of the curtains that enclosed him, at length disturbed his repose; he awoke terrified, and stung to the quick by those wormwood-colour flies, which emit from their wings a suffocating stench. The miserable Monarch was perplexed how to act, though his wits were not idle in seeking expedients, whilst Bababalouk lay snoring amidst a swarm of those insects, that busily thronged to pay court to his nose. The little pages, famished with hunger, had dropped their fans on the ground, and exerted their dying voices in bitter reproaches on the Caliph, who now for the first time heard the language of truth.

Thus stimulated, he renewed his imprecations against the Giaour, and bestowed upon Mahomet some soothing expressions. "Where am I?" cried he; "what are these

dreadful rocks? these valleys of darkness? are we arrived at the horrible Kaf? is the Simurgh coming to pluck out my eyes, as a punishment for undertaking this impious enterprise?" Having said this he bellowed like a calf, and turned himself towards an outlet in the side of his pavilion; but alas! what objects occurred to his view? on one side a plain of black sand that appeared to be unbounded, and on the other perpendicular crags, bristled over with those abominable thistles which had so severely lacerated his tongue. He fancied however that he perceived, amongst the brambles and briers, some gigantic flowers, but was mistaken; for these were only the dangling palampores and variegated tatters of his gay retinue. As there were several clefts in the rock from whence water seemed to have flowed, Vathek applied his ear with the hope of catching the sound of some latent runnel, but could only distinguish the low murmurs of his people, who were repining at their journey, and complaining for the want of water.

"To what purpose," asked they, "have we been brought hither? hath our Caliph another tower to build? or have the relentless Afrits, whom Carathis so much loves, fixed in this place their abode?"

At the name of Carathis Vathek recollected

the tablets he had received from his mother, who assured him they were fraught with preternatural qualities, and advised him to consult them as emergencies might require. Whilst he was engaged in turning them over, he heard a shout of joy and a loud clapping of hands; the curtains of his pavilion were soon drawn back, and he beheld Bababalouk, followed by a troop of his favourites, conducting two dwarfs, each a cubit high, who brought between them a large basket of melons, oranges and pomegranates. They were singing in the sweetest tones the words that follow:

"We dwell on the top of these rocks in a cabin of rushes and canes; the eagles envy us our nest; a small spring supplies us with Abdest, and we daily repeat prayers which the Prophet approves. We love you, O commander of the faithful! our master, the good Emir Fakreddin, loves you also; he reveres in your person the vicegerent of Mahomet. Little as we are, in us he confides; he knows our hearts to be good as our bodies are contemptible, and hath placed us here to aid those who are bewildered on these dreary mountains. Last night, whilst we were occupied within our cell in reading the holy Koran, a sudden hurricane blew out our lights and

rocked our habitation; for two whole hours a palpable darkness prevailed, but we heard sounds at a distance which we conjectured to proceed from the bells of a Cafila passing over the rocks; our ears were soon filled with deplorable shrieks, frightful roarings, and the sound of tymbals. Chilled with terror, we concluded that the Deggial, with his exterminating angels, had sent forth their plagues on the earth. In the midst of these melancholy reflections we perceived flames of the deepest red glow in the horizon, and found ourselves in a few moments covered with flakes of fire; amazed at so strange an appearance, we took up the volume dictated by the blessed Intelligence, and, kneeling by the light of the fire that surrounded us, we recited the verse which says: 'Put no trust in any thing but the mercy of Heaven; there is no help save in the holy Prophet; the mountain of Kaf itself may tremble, it is the power of Alla only that cannot be moved.' After having pronounced these words we felt consolation, and our minds were hushed into a sacred repose; silence ensued, and our ears clearly distinguished a voice in the air, saying: 'Servants of my faithful servant! go down to the happy valley of Fakreddin; tell him that an illustrious opportunity now offers to satiate the

thirst of his hospitable heart. The Commander of true believers is this day bewildered amongst these mountains, and stands in need of thy aid.' We obeyed with joy the angelic mission, and our master, filled with pious zeal, hath culled with his own hands these melons, oranges and pomegranates; he is following us with a hundred dromedaries laden with the purest waters of his fountains, and is coming to kiss the fringe of your consecrated robe, and implore you to enter his humble habitation, which, placed amidst these barren wilds, resembles an emerald set in lead." The dwarfs, having ended their address, remained still standing, and, with hands crossed upon their bosoms, preserved a respectful silence.

Vathek in the midst of this curious harangue seized the basket, and long before it was finished the fruits had dissolved in his mouth; as he continued to eat his piety increased, and in the same breath which recited his prayers he called for the Koran and sugar.

Such was the state of his mind when the tablets, which were thrown by at the approach of the dwarfs, again attracted his eye; he took them up, but was ready to drop on the ground when he beheld, in large red characters, these words inscribed by Carathis, which were indeed enough to make him tremble:

"Beware of thy old doctors, and their puny messengers of but one cubit high; distrust their pious frauds, and, instead of eating their melons, impale on a spit the bearers of them. Shouldest thou be such a fool as to visit them, the portal of the subterranean palace will be shut in thy face, and with such force as shall shake thee asunder; thy body shall be spit upon, and bats will engender in thy belly."

"To what tends this ominous rhapsody?" cries the Caliph; "and must I then perish in these deserts with thirst, whilst I may refresh myself in the valley of melons and cucumbers? Accursed be the Giaour, with his portal of ebony! he hath made me dance attendance too long already. Besides, who shall prescribe laws to me? I forsooth must not enter any one's habitation! Be it so; but what one can I enter that is not my own!"

Bababalouk, who lost not a syllable of this soliloquy, applauded it with all his heart, and the ladies for the first time agreed with him in opinion.

The dwarfs were entertained, caressed and seated with great ceremony on little cushions of satin. The symmetry of their persons was the subject of criticism; not an inch of them was suffered to pass unexamined; knick-nacks and dainties were offered in profusion, but all

were declined with respectful gravity. They clambered up the sides of the Caliph's seat, and, placing themselves each on one of his shoulders, began to whisper prayers in his ears; their tongues quivered like the leaves of a poplar, and the patience of Vathek was almost exhausted, when the acclamations of the troops announced the approach of Fakreddin, who was come with a hundred old grey-beards and as many Korans and dromedaries; they instantly set about their ablutions, and began to repeat the Bismillah; Vathek, to get rid of these officious monitors, followed their example, for his hands were burning.

The good Emir, who was punctiliously religious and likewise a great dealer in compliments, made an harangue five times more prolix and insipid than his harbingers had already delivered. The Caliph, unable any longer to refrain, exclaimed:

"For the love of Mahomet, my dear Fakreddin, have done! let us proceed to your valley, and enjoy the fruits that heaven hath vouchsafed you."

The hint of proceeding put all into motion; the venerable attendants of the Emir set forward somewhat slowly, but Vathek, having ordered his little pages in private to goad on the dromedaries, loud fits of laughter broke

forth from the cages, for the unwieldy curvetting of these poor beasts, and the ridiculous distress of their superannuated riders, afforded the ladies no small entertainment.

They descended however unhurt into the valley, by the large steps which the Emir had cut in the rock; and already the murmuring of streams, and the rustling of leaves began to catch their attention. The cavalcade soon entered a path which was skirted by flowering shrubs, and extended to a vast wood of palm-trees, whose branches overspread a building of hewn stone. This edifice was crowned with nine domes, and adorned with as many portals of bronze, on which was engraven the following inscription: "This is the asylum of pilgrims, the refuge of travellers, and the depository of secrets for all parts of the world."

Nine pages, beautiful as the day, and clothed in robes of Egyptian linen, very long and very modest, were standing at each door. They received the whole retinue with an easy and inviting air. Four of the most amiable placed the Caliph on a magnificent taktrevan; four others, somewhat less graceful, took charge of Bababalouk, who capered for joy at the snug little cabin that fell to his share; the pages that remained waited on the rest of the *train.*

When everything masculine was gone out of sight, the gate of a large enclosure on the right turned on its harmonious hinges, and a young female of a slender form came forth; her light brown hair floated in the hazy breeze of the twilight; a troop of young maidens, like the Pleiades, attended her on tip-toe. They hastened to the pavilions that contained the sultanas, and the young lady, gracefully bending, said to them:

"Charming Princesses, every thing is ready; we have prepared beds for your repose, and strewed your apartments with jasmine; no insects will keep off slumber from visiting your eyelids, we will dispel them with a thousand plumes; come then, amiable ladies! refresh your delicate feet and your ivory limbs in baths of rose water; and, by the light of perfumed lamps, your servants will amuse you with tales."

The sultanas accepted with pleasure these obliging offers, and followed the young lady to the Emir's harem, where we must for a moment leave them and return to the Caliph.

Vathek found himself beneath a vast dome, illuminated by a thousand lamps of rock crystal; as many vases of the same material, filled with excellent sherbet, sparkled on a large table, where a profusion of viands were

spread; amongst others were sweetbreads stewed in milk of almonds, saffron soups, and lamb *à la crême*, of all which the Caliph was amazingly fond. He took of each as much as he was able, testified his sense of the Emir's friendship by the gaiety of his heart, and made the dwarfs dance against their will, for these little devotees durst not refuse the Commander of the faithful; at last he spread himself on the sofa, and slept sounder than he had ever before.

Beneath this dome a general silence prevailed, for there was nothing to disturb it but the jaws of Bababalouk, who had untrussed himself to eat with greater advantage, being anxious to make amends for his fast in the mountains. As his spirits were too high to admit of his sleeping, and not loving to be idle, he proposed with himself to visit the harem, and repair to his charge of the ladies, to examine if they had been properly lubricated with the balm of Mecca, if their eyebrows and tresses were in order, and, in a word, to perform all the little offices they might need. He sought for a long time together, but without being able to find out the door; he durst not speak aloud for fear of disturbing the Caliph, and not a soul was stirring in the precincts of the palace; he almost de-

spaired of effecting his purpose, when a low whispering just reached his ear; it came from the dwarfs, who were returned to their old occupation, and, for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth time in their lives, were reading over the Koran. They very politely invited Bababalouk to be of their party, but his head was full of other concerns. The dwarfs, though scandalized at his dissolute morals, directed him to the apartments he wanted to find; his way thither lay through a hundred dark corridors, along which he groped as he went, and at last began to catch, from the extremity of a passage, the charming gossiping of the women, which not a little delighted his heart. "Ah, ha! what, not yet asleep?" cried he; and, taking long strides as he spoke, "did you not suspect me of abjuring my charge? I stayed but to finish what my master had left."

Two of the black eunuchs, on hearing a voice so loud, detached a party in haste, sabre in hand, to discover the cause, but presently was repeated on all sides: "'Tis only Bababalouk! no one but Bababalouk!" This circumspect guardian, having gone up to a thin veil of carnation-coloured silk that hung before the doorway, distinguished, by means of the softened splendour that shone through it,

an oval bath of dark porphyry, surrounded by curtains festooned in large folds; through the apertures between them, as they were not drawn close, groups of young slaves were visible, amongst whom Bababalouk perceived his pupils, indulgingly expanding their arms, as if to embrace the perfumed water and refresh themselves after their fatigues. The looks of tender languor, their confidential whispers, and the enchanting smiles with which they were imparted, the exquisite fragrance of the roses, all combined to inspire a voluptuousness, which even Bababalouk himself was scarce able to withstand.

He summoned up however his usual solemnity, and, in the peremptory tone of authority, commanded the ladies instantly to leave the bath. Whilst he was issuing these mandates the young Nouronihar, daughter of the Emir, who was sprightly as an antelope, and full of wanton gaiety, beckoned one of her slaves to let down the great swing, which was suspended to the ceiling by cords of silk, and whilst this was doing, winked to her companions in the bath, who, chagrined to be forced from so soothing a state of indolence, began to twist it round Bababalouk, and teaze him with a thousand vagaries.

When Nouronihar perceived that he was

exhausted with fatigue, she accosted him with an arch air of respectful concern and said: "My Lord! it is not by any means decent, that the chief eunuch of the Caliph, our Sovereign, should thus continue standing; deign but to recline your graceful person upon this sofa, which will burst with vexation, if it have not the honour to receive you."

Caught by these flattering accents, Bababalouk gallantly replied: "Delight of the apple of my eye! I accept the invitation of thy honeyed lips; and, to say truth, my senses are dazzled with the radiance that beams from thy charms."

"Repose then at your ease," replied the beauty, and placed him on the pretended sofa, which, quicker than lightning, gave way all at once. The rest of the women, having aptly conceived her design, sprang naked from the bath, and plied the swing with such unmerciful jerks, that it swept through the whole compass of a very lofty dome, and took from the poor victim all power of respiration; sometimes his feet rased the surface of the water, and at others the skylight almost flattened his nose; in vain did he pierce the air with the cries of a voice that resembled the ringing of a cracked basin, for their peals of laughter were still more predominant.

Nouronihar, in the inebriety of youthful spirits, being used only to eunuchs of ordinary harems, and having never seen any thing so royal and disgusting, was far more diverted than all of the rest; she began to parody some Persian verses, and sung with an accent most demurely piquant:

"O gentle white dove, as thou soar'st through the air,
Vouchsafe one kind glance on the mate of thy love;
Melodious Philomel, I am thy rose;
Warble some couplet to ravish my heart!"

The sultanas and their slaves, stimulated by these pleasantries, persevered at the swing with such unremitted assiduity, that at length the cord which had secured it snapt suddenly asunder, and Bababalouk fell floundering like a turtle to the bottom of the bath. This accident occasioned a universal shout; twelve little doors, till now unobserved, flew open at once, and the ladies in an instant made their escape, after throwing all the towels on his head, and putting out the lights that remained.

The deplorable animal, in water to the chin, overwhelmed with darkness, and unable to extricate himself from the wrap that embarrassed him, was still doomed to hear for his

further consolation the fresh bursts of merriment his disaster occasioned. He bustled, but in vain, to get from the bath, for the margin was become so slippery with the oil spilt in breaking the lamps, that at every effort he slid back with a plunge, which resounded aloud through the hollow of the dome. These cursed peals of laughter at every relapse were redoubled; and he, who thought the place infested rather by devils than women, resolved to cease groping and abide in the bath, where he amused himself with soliloquies, interspersed with imprecations, of which his malicious neighbours reclining on down suffered not an accent to escape. In this delectable plight the morning surprised him. The Caliph, wondering at his absence, had caused him to be everywhere sought for. At last he was drawn forth, almost smothered from the wisp of linen, and wet even to the marrow. Limping and chattering his teeth, he appeared before his master, who inquired what was the matter, and how he came soused in so strange a pickle?

"And why did you enter this cursed lodge?" answered Bababalouk, gruffly. "Ought a monarch like you to visit with his harem the abode of a grey bearded emir, who knows nothing of life? And with what gra-

cious damsels doth the place, too, abound! Fancy to yourself how they have soaked me like a burnt crust, and made me dance like a jack-pudding the live-long night through, on their damnable swing. What an excellent lesson for your sultanas to follow, into whom I have instilled such reserve and decorum!"

Vathek, comprehending not a syllable of all this invective, obliged him to relate minutely the transaction; but, instead of sympathizing with the miserable sufferer, he laughed immoderately at the device of the swing, and the figure of Bababalouk mounting upon it. The stung eunuch could scarcely preserve the semblance of respect.

"Ay, laugh, my lord! laugh," said he; "but I wish this Nouronihar would play some trick on you, she is too wicked to spare even majesty itself."

Those words made for the present but a slight impression on the Caliph; but they not long after recurred to his mind.

This conversation was cut short by Fakreddin, who came to request that Vathek would join in the prayers and ablutions to be solemnized on a spacious meadow, watered by innumerable streams. The Caliph found the waters refreshing, but the prayers abominably irksome; he diverted himself however

with the multitude of Calenders, Santons and Dervises, who were continually coming and going, but especially with the Brahmins, Fakirs and other enthusiasts, who had travelled from the heart of India, and halted on their way with the Emir. These latter had, each of them, some mummery peculiar to himself. One dragged a huge chain wherever he went, another an ouran-outang, whilst a third was furnished with scourges, and all performed to a charm; some clambered up trees, holding one foot in the air; others poised themselves over a fire, and without mercy filliped their noses. There were some amongst them that cherished vermin, which were not ungrateful in requiting their caresses. These rambling fanatics revolted the hearts of the Dervises, the Calenders and Santons; however the vehemence of their aversion soon subsided, under the hope that the presence of the Caliph would cure their folly, and convert them to the Mussulman faith; but alas! how great was their disappointment! for Vathek, instead of preaching to them, treated them as buffoons, bade them present his compliments to Visnow and Ixhora, and discovered a predilection for a squat old man from the isle of Serendib, who was more ridiculous than any of the rest.

"Come!" said he, "for the love of your gods bestow a few slaps on your chops to amuse me."

The old fellow, offended at such an address, began loudly to weep; but, as he betrayed a villanous drivelling in his tears, the Caliph turned his back and listened to Bababalouk, who whispered, whilst he held the umbrella over him: "Your Majesty should be cautious of this odd assembly, which hath been collected I know not for what. Is it necessary to exhibit such spectacles to a mighty Potentate, with interludes of Talapoins more mangy than dogs? Were I you I would command a fire to be kindled, and at once purge the earth of the Emir, his harem, and all his menagery."

"Tush, dolt," answered Vathek; "and know that all this infinitely charms me, nor shall I leave the meadow till I have visited every hive of these pious mendicants."

Wherever the Caliph directed his course objects of pity were sure to swarm round him; the blind, the purblind, smarts without noses, damsels without ears, each to extol the munificence of Fakreddin, who, as well as his attendant grey-beards, dealt about gratis plasters and cataplasms to all that applied. At noon a superb corps of cripples made its ap-

pearance, and soon after advanced by platoons on the plain, the completest association of invalids that had ever been embodied till then. The blind went groping with the blind, the lame limped on together, and the maimed made gestures to each other with the only arm that remained; the sides of a considerable water-fall were crowded by the deaf, amongst whom were some from Pegû with ears uncommonly handsome and large, but were still less able to hear than the rest; nor were there wanting others in abundance with humpbacks, wenny necks, and even horns of an exquisite polish.

The Emir, to aggrandize the solemnity of the festival in honour of his illustrious visitant, ordered the turf to be spread on all sides with skins and table-cloths, upon which were served up for the good Mussulmans pilaus of every hue, with other orthodox dishes; and, by the express order of Vathek, who was shamefully tolerant, small plates of abominations for regaling the rest. This Prince, on seeing so many mouths put in motion, began to think it time for employing his own; in spite therefore of every remonstrance from the chief of his eunuchs, he resolved to have a dinner dressed on the spot. The complaisant Emir immediately gave orders for a table

to be placed in the shade of the willows. The first service consisted of fish, which they drew from a river flowing over sands of gold at the foot of a lofty hill; these were broiled as fast as taken, and served up with a sauce of vinegar, and small herbs that grew on Mount Sinai; for everything with the Emir was excellent and pious.

The dessert was not quite set on when the sound of lutes from the hill was repeated by the echoes of the neighbouring mountains. The Caliph, with an emotion of pleasure and surprise, had no sooner raised up his head than a handful of jasmine dropped on his face; an abundance of tittering succeeded the frolic, and instantly appeared through the bushes the elegant forms of several young females, skipping and bounding like roes. The fragrance diffused from their hair struck the sense of Vathek, who, in an ecstasy, suspending his repast, said to Bababalouk:

"Are the Peries come down from their spheres? Note her in particular whose form is so perfect, venturously running on the brink of the precipice, and turning back her head, as regardless of nothing but the graceful flow of her robe; with what captivating impatience doth she contend with the bushes for her veil! could it be she who threw the jasmine at me?"

"Ay! she it was; and you too would she throw from the top of the rock," answered Bababalouk; "for that is my good friend Nouronihar, who so kindly lent me her swing; my dear lord and master," added he, twisting a twig that hung by the rind from a willow, "let me correct her for her want of respect; the Emir will have no reason to complain, since (bating what I owe to his piety) he is much to be censured for keeping a troop of girls on the mountains, whose sharp air gives their blood too brisk a circulation.

"Peace, blasphemer," said the Caliph; "speak not thus of her, who over her mountains, leads my heart a willing captive; contrive rather that my eyes may be fixed upon hers, that I may respire her sweet breath, as she bounds panting along these delightful wilds!" On saying these words Vathek extended his arms towards the hill, and directing his eyes with an anxiety unknown to him before, endeavoured to keep within view the object that enthralled his soul; but her course was as difficult to follow as the flight of one of those beautiful blue butterflies of Cashmere, which are at once so volatile and rare.

The Caliph, not satisfied with seeing, wished also to hear Nouronihar, and eagerly turned to catch the sound of her voice; at last

he distinguished her whispering to one of her companions behind the thicket from whence she had thrown the jasmine: "A Caliph it must be owned is a fine thing to see, but my little Gulchenrouz is much more amiable; one lock of his hair is of more value to me than the richest embroidery of the Indies; I had rather that his teeth should mischievously press my finger than the richest ring of the imperial treasure; where have you left him, Sutlememe? and why is he now not here?"

The agitated Caliph still wished to hear more, but she immediately retired with all her attendants; the fond Monarch pursued her with his eyes till she was gone out of sight, and then continued like a bewildered and benighted traveller, from whom the clouds had obscured the constellation that guided his way; the curtain of night seemed dropped before him; everything appeared discoloured; the falling waters filled his soul with dejection, and his tears trickled down the jasmines he had caught from Nouronihar, and placed in his inflamed bosom; he snatched up a shining pebble, to remind him of the scene where he felt the first tumults of love. Two hours were elapsed, and evening drew on before he could resolve to depart from the place; he often, but in vain, attempted to go; a soft languor ener-

vated the powers of his mind; extending himself on the brink of the stream, he turned his eyes towards the blue summits of the mountain and exclaimed: "What concealest thou behind thee? what is passing in thy solitudes? Whither is she gone? O heaven! perhaps she is now wandering in thy grottos, with her happy Gulchenrouz!"

In the meantime the damps began to descend, and the Emir, solicitous for the health of the Caliph, ordered the imperial litter to be brought. Vathek, absorbed in his reveries, was imperceptibly removed and conveyed back to the salon that received him the evening before.

But let us leave the Caliph, immersed in his new passion, and attend Nouronihar beyond the rocks, where she had again joined her beloved Gulchenrouz. This Gulchenrouz was the son of Ali Hassan, brother to the Emir, and the most delicate and lovely creature in the world. Ali Hassan, who had been absent ten years on a voyage to the unknown seas, committed at his departure this child, the only survivor of many, to the care and protection of his brother. Gulchenrouz could write in various characters with precision, and paint upon vellum the most elegant arabesques that fancy could devise; his sweet voice accom-

panied the lute in the most enchanting manner, and when he sung the loves of Megnoun and Leileh, or some unfortunate lovers of ancient days, tears insensibly overflowed the cheeks of his auditors; the verses he composed (for, like Megnoun, he too was a poet) inspired that unresisting languor so frequently fatal to the female heart; the women all doted upon him; for though he had passed his thirteenth year, they still detained him in the harem; his dancing was light as the gossamer waved by the zephyrs of spring, but his arms which twined so gracefully with those of the young girls in the dance, could neither dart the lance in the chase, nor curb the steeds that pastured his uncle's domains. The bow however he drew with a certain aim, and would have excelled his competitors in the race, could he have broken the ties that bound him to Nouronihar.

The two brothers had mutually engaged their children to each other, and Nouronihar loved her cousin more than her eyes; both had the same tastes and amusements, the same long, languishing looks, the same tresses, the same fair complexions, and when Gulchenrouz appeared in the dress of his cousin he seemed to be more feminine than even herself. If at any time he left the harem

to visit Fakreddin, it was with all the bashfulness of a fawn, that consciously ventures from the lair of its dam; he was however wanton enough to mock the solemn old greybeards to whom he was subject, though sure to be rated without mercy in return; whenever this happened he would plunge into the recesses of the harem, and sobbing take refuge in the arms of Nouronihar, who loved even his faults beyond the virtues of others.

It fell out this evening that, after leaving the Caliph in the meadow, she ran with Gulchenrouz over the green sward of the mountain that sheltered the vale where Fakreddin had chosen to reside. The sun was dilated on the edge of the horizon; and the young people, whose fancies were lively and inventive, imagined they beheld in the gorgeous clouds of the west the domes of Shadukiam and Ambreabad, where the Peries have fixed their abode. Nouronihar, sitting on the slope of the hill, supported on her knees the perfumed head of Gulchenrouz; the air was calm, and no sound stirred but the voices of other young girls, who were drawing cool water from the streams below. The unexpected arrival of the Caliph, and the splendour that marked his appearance, had already filled with emotion the ardent soul of Nouronihar; her vanity ir-

resistibly prompted her to pique the Prince's attention, and this she before took good care to effect whilst he picked up the jasmine she had thrown upon him. But when Gulchenrouz asked after the flowers he had culled for her bosom, Nouronihar was all in confusion; she hastily kissed his forehead, arose in a flutter, and walked with unequal steps on the border of the precipice. Night advanced, and the pure gold of the setting sun had yielded to a sanguine red, the glow of which, like the reflection of a burning furnace, flushed Nouronihar's animated countenance. Gulchenrouz, alarmed at the agitation of his cousin, said to her with a supplicating accent:

"Let us be gone; the sky looks portentous, the tamarisks tremble more than common, and the raw wind chills my very heart; come! let us be gone, 'tis a melancholy night!"

Then, taking hold of her hand, he drew it towards the path he besought her to go. Nouronihar unconsciously followed the attraction, for a thousand strange imaginations occupied her spirit; she passed the large round of honeysuckles, her favourite resort, without ever vouchsafing it a glance, yet Gulchenrouz could not help snatching off a few shoots in his way, though he ran as if a wild beast were behind.

The young females seeing him approach in such haste, and according to custom expecting a dance, instantly assembled in a circle and took each other by the hand; but Gulchenrouz, coming up out of breath, fell down at once on the grass. This accident struck with consternation the whole of this frolicsome party; whilst Nouronihar, half distracted, and overcome, both by the violence of her exercise and the tumult of her thoughts, sunk feebly down at his side, cherished his cold hands in her bosom, and chafed his temples with a fragrant unguent. At length he came to himself, and, wrapping up his head in the robe of his cousin, entreated that she would not return to the harem; he was afraid of being snapped at by Shaban his tutor, a wrinkled old eunuch of a surly disposition; for having interrupted the stated walk of Nouronihar, he dreaded lest the churl should take it amiss. The whole of this sprightly group, sitting round upon a mossy knoll, began to entertain themselves with various pastimes, whilst their superintendents the eunuchs were gravely conversing at a distance. The nurse of the Emir's daughter, observing her pupil sit ruminating with her eyes on the ground, endeavoured to amuse her with diverting tales, to which Gulchenrouz, who had already

forgotten his inquietudes, listened with a breathless attention; he laughed, he clapped his hands, and passed a hundred little tricks on the whole of the company, without omitting the eunuchs, whom he provoked to run after him, in spite of their age and decrepitude.

During these occurrences the moon arose, the wind subsided, and the evening became so serene and inviting, that a resolution was taken to sup on the spot. Sutlememe, who excelled in dressing a salad, having filled large bowls of porcelain with eggs of small birds, curds turned with citron juice, slices of cucumber, and the inmost leaves of delicate herbs, handed it round from one to another, and gave each their shares in a large spoon of Cocknos. Gulchenrouz, nestling as usual in the bosom of Nouronihar, pouted out his vermilion little lips against the offer of Sutlememe, and would take it only from the hand of his cousin, on whose mouth he hung like a bee inebriated with the quintessence of flowers. One of the eunuchs ran to fetch melons, whilst others were employed in showering down almonds from the branches that overhung this amiable party.

In the midst of this festive scene there appeared a light on the top of the highest moun-

tain, which attracted the notice of every eye; this light was not less bright than the moon when at full, and might have been taken for her, had it not been that the moon was already risen. The phenomenon occasioned a general surprise, and no one could conjecture the cause; it could not be a fire, for the light was clear and bluish, nor had meteors ever been seen of that magnitude or splendour. This strange light faded for a moment, and immediately renewed its brightness; it first appeared motionless at the foot of the rock, whence it darted in an instant to sparkle in a thicket of palm-trees; from thence it glided along the torrent, and at last fixed in a glen that was narrow and dark. The moment it had taken its direction, Gulchenrouz, whose heart always trembled at anything sudden or rare, drew Nouronihar by the robe, and anxiously requested her to return to the harem; the women were importunate in seconding the entreaty, but the curiosity of the Emir's daughter prevailed; she not only refused to go back, but resolved at all hazards to pursue the appearance. Whilst they were debating what was best to be done, the light shot forth so dazzling a blaze, that they all fled away shrieking; Nouronihar followed them a few steps, but, coming to the turn of a little bye

path, stopped, and went back alone; as she ran with an alertness peculiar to herself, it was not long before she came to the place where they had just been supping. The globe of fire now appeared stationary in the glen, and burned in majestic stillness. Nouronihar, compressing her hands upon her bosom, hesitated for some moments to advance; the solitude of her situation was new, the silence of the night awful, and every object inspired sensations which till then she never had felt; the affright of Gulchenrouz recurred to her mind, and she a thousand times turned to go back, but this luminous appearance was always before her; urged on by an irresistible impulse she continued to approach it, in defiance of every obstacle that opposed her progress.

At length she arrived at the opening of the glen; but, instead of coming up to the light, she found herself surrounded by darkness, excepting that at a considerable distance a faint spark glimmered by fits. She stopped a second time; the sound of water-falls mingling their murmurs, the hollow rustlings amongst the palm-branches, and the funereal screams of the birds from their rifted trunks, all conspired to fill her with terror; she imagined every moment that she trod on some venomous reptile; all the stories of malignant

Dives and dismal Goules thronged into her memory; but her curiosity was, notwithstanding, more predominant than her fears; she therefore firmly entered a winding track that led towards the spark, but, being a stranger to the path, she had not gone far till she began to repent of her rashness.

"Alas!" said she, "that I were but in those secure and illuminated apartments where my evenings glided on with Gulchenrouz! Dear child! how would thy heart flutter with terror wert thou wandering in these wild solitudes like me!" At the close of this apostrophe she regained her road, and, coming to steps hewn out in the rock, ascended them undismayed; the light, which was now gradually enlarging, appeared above her on the summit of the mountain; at length she distinguished a plaintive and melodious union of voices, proceeding from a sort of cavern, that resembled the dirges which are sung over tombs; a sound likewise, like that which arises from the filling of baths, at the same time struck her ear; she continued ascending, and discovered large wax torches in full blaze planted here and there in the fissures of the rock; this preparation filled her with fear, whilst the subtle and potent odour which the torches exhaled caused her to sink almost lifeless at the entrance of the grot.

Casting her eyes within in this kind of trance, she beheld a large cistern of gold filled with a water, whose vapour distilled on her face a dew of the essence of roses; a soft symphony resounded through the grot; on the sides of the cistern she noticed appendages of royalty, diadems and feathers of the heron, all sparkling with carbuncles; whilst her attention was fixed on this display of magnificence, the music ceased, and a voice instantly demanded:

"For what monarch were these torches kindled, this bath prepared, and these habiliments, which belong, not only to the sovereigns of the earth, but even to the Talismanic Powers?"

To which a second voice answered: "They are for the charming daughter of the Emir Fakreddin."

"What," replied the first, "for that trifler, who consumes her time with a giddy child, immersed in softness, and who at best can make but an enervated husband?"

"And can she," rejoined the other voice, "be amused with such empty trifles, whilst the Caliph, the sovereign of the world, he who is destined to enjoy the treasures of the preadamite Sultans, a prince six feet high, and whose eyes pervade the inmost soul of a fe-

male, is inflamed with the love of her. No! she will be wise enough to answer that passion alone that can aggrandize her glory; no doubt she will, and despise the puppet of her fancy. Then all the riches this place contains, as well as the carbuncle of Giamschid, shall be hers."

"You judge right," returned the first voice, "and I haste to Istakhar to prepare the palace of subterranean fire for the reception of the bridal pair."

The voices ceased, the torches were extinguished, the most entire darkness succeeded, and Nouronihar, recovering with a start, found herself reclined on a sofa in the harem of her father. She clapped her hands, and immediately came together Gulchenrouz and her women, who, in despair at having lost her, had despatched eunuchs to seek her in every direction; Shaban appeared with the rest, and began to reprimand her with an air of consequence:

"Little impertinent," said he, "whence got you false keys? or are you beloved of some Genius that hath given you a pick-lock? I will try the extent of your power; come, to your chamber! through the two skylights; and expect not the company of Gulchenrouz; be expeditious! I will shut you up in the double tower."

At these menaces Nouronihar indignantly raised her head, opened on Shaban her black eyes, which, since the important dialogue of the enchanted grot, were considerably enlarged, and said: "Go, speak thus to slaves, but learn to reverence her who is born to give laws, and subject all to her power."

She was proceeding in the same style, but was interrupted by a sudden exclamation of "The Caliph! The Caliph!" The curtains at once were thrown open, and the slaves prostrate in double rows, whilst poor little Gulchenrouz hid himself beneath the elevation of a sofa. At first appeared a file of black eunuchs, trailing after them long trains of muslin embroidered with gold, and holding in their hands censers, which dispensed as they passed the grateful perfume of the wood of aloes; next marched Bababalouk with a solemn strut, and tossing his head as not overpleased at the visit; Vathek came close after, superbly robed, his gait was unembarrassed and noble, and his presence would have engaged admiration, though he had not been the Sovereign of the world; he approached Nouronihar with a throbbing heart, and seemed enraptured at the full effulgence of her radiant eyes, of which he had before caught but a few glimpses; but she instantly

depressed them, and her confusion augmented her beauty.

Bababalouk, who was a thorough adept in coincidences of this nature, and knew that the worst game should be played with the best face, immediately made a signal for all to retire; and no sooner did he perceive beneath the sofa the little one's feet, than he drew him forth without ceremony, set him upon his shoulders, and lavished on him as he went off a thousand odious caresses; Gulchenrouz cried out, and resisted till his cheeks became the colour of the blossom of the pomegranate, and the tears that started into his eyes shot forth a gleam of indignation; he cast a significant glance at Nouronihar, which the Caliph noticing asked: "Is that then your Gulchenrouz?"

"Sovereign of the world!" answered she, "spare my cousin, whose innocence and gentleness deserve not your anger!"

"Take comfort," said Vathek, with a smile, "he is in good hands; Bababalouk is fond of children, and never goes without sweetmeats and comfits."

The daughter of Fakreddin was abashed, and suffered Gulchenrouz to be borne away without adding a word. The tumult of her bosom betrayed her confusion; and Vathek,

becoming still more impassioned, gave a loose to his frenzy, which had only not subdued the last faint strugglings of reluctance, when the Emir suddenly bursting in, threw his face upon the ground at the feet of the Caliph, and said:

"Commander of the faithful! abase not yourself to the meanness of your slave."

"No, Emir," replied Vathek, "I raise her to an equality with myself; I declare her my wife, and the glory of your race shall extend from one generation to another."

"Alas! my lord," said Fakreddin, as he plucked off the honours of his beard, "cut short the days of your faithful servant, rather than force him to depart from his word. Nouronihar, as her hands evince, is solemnly promised to Gulchenrouz, the son of my brother Ali Hassan; they are united also in heart, their faith is mutually plighted, and affiances so sacred cannot be broken."

"What then!" replied the Caliph bluntly, "would you surrender this divine beauty to a husband more womanish than herself? and can you imagine that I will suffer her charms to decay in hands so inefficient and nerveless? No! she is destined to live out her life within my embraces; such is my will; retire and disturb not the night I devote to the homage of her charms."

The irritated Emir drew forth his sabre, presented it to Vathek, and, stretching out his neck, said in a firm tone of voice: "Strike your unhappy host, my lord! he has lived long enough, since he hath seen the Prophet's Vicegerent violate the rites of hospitality."

At his uttering these words Nouronihar, unable to support any longer the conflict of her passions, sunk down in a swoon. Vathek, both terrified for her life and furious at an opposition to his will, bade Fakreddin assist his daughter, and withdrew, darting his terrible look at the unfortunate Emir, who suddenly fell backward bathed in a sweat cold as the damp of death.

Gulchenrouz, who had escaped from the hands of Bababalouk, and was that instant returned, called out for help as loudly as he could, not having strength to afford it himself. Pale and panting, the poor child attempted to revive Nouronihar by caresses; and it happened that the thrilling warmth of his lips restored her to life. Fakreddin beginning also to recover from the look of the Caliph, with difficulty tottered to a seat, and after warily casting round his eye to see if this dangerous Prince were gone, sent for Shaban and Sutlememe, and said to them apart:

"My friends! violent evils require as vio-

lent remedies; the Caliph has brought desolation and horror into my family, and how shall we resist his power? another of his looks will send me to my grave. Fetch then that narcotic powder, which the Dervish brought me from Aracan; a dose of it, the effect of which will continue three days, must be administered to each of these children; the Caliph will believe them to be dead, for they will have all the appearance of death; we shall go as if to inter them in the cave of Meimoune, at the entrance of the great desert of sand, and near the cabin of my dwarfs. When all the spectators shall be withdrawn, you, Shaban, and four select eunuchs, shall convey them to the lake, where provision shall be ready to support them a month; for one day allotted to the surprise this event will occasion, five to the tears, a fortnight to reflection, and the rest to prepare for renewing his progress, will, according to my calculation, fill up the whole time that Vathek will tarry, and I shall then be freed from his intrusion."

"Your plan," said Sutlememe, "is a good one, if it can but be effected. I have remarked, that Nouronihar is well able to support the glances of the Caliph, and that he is far from being sparing of them to her; be assured therefore, notwithstanding her fondness

for Gulchenrouz, she will never remain quiet while she knows him to be here, unless we can persuade her that both herself and Gulchenrouz are really dead, and that they were conveyed to those rocks for a limited season to expiate the little faults of which their love was the cause; we will add that we killed ourselves in despair, and that your dwarfs, whom they never yet saw, will preach to them delectable sermons. I will engage that everything shall succeed to the bent of your wishes."

"Be it so!" said Fakreddin, "I approve your proposal; let us lose not a moment to give it effect."

They forthwith hastened to seek for the powder, which, being mixed in a sherbet, was immediately drunk by Gulchenrouz and Nouronihar. Within the space of an hour both were seized with violent palpitations, and a general numbness gradually ensued; they arose from the floor, where they had remained ever since the Caliph's departure, and, ascending to the sofa, reclined themselves at full length upon it, clasped in each other's embraces.

"Cherish me, my dear Nouronihar!" said Gulchenrouz; "put thy hand upon my heart, for it feels as if it were frozen. Alas! thou

art as cold as myself! hath the Caliph murdered us both with his terrible look?"

"I am dying!" cried she in a faltering voice; "press me closer, I am ready to expire!"

"Let us die then together," answered the little Gulchenrouz, whilst his breast laboured with a convulsive sigh; "let me at least breathe forth my soul on thy lips!" They spoke no more, and became as dead.

Immediately the most piercing cries were heard through the harem, whilst Shaban and Sutlememe personated with great adroitness the parts of persons in despair. The Emir, who was sufficiently mortified to be forced into such untoward expedients, and had now for the first time made a trial of his powder, was under no necessity of counterfeiting grief. The slaves, who had flocked together from all quarters, stood motionless at the spectacle before them; all lights were extinguished save two lamps, which shed a wan glimmering over the faces of these lovely flowers, that seemed to be faded in the spring-time of life; funeral vestments were prepared, their bodies were washed with rose-water, their beautiful tresses were braided and incensed, and they were wrapped in simars whiter than alabaster. At the moment that

their attendants were placing two wreaths of their favourite jasmines on their brows, the Caliph, who had just heard the tragical catastrophe, arrived; he looked not less pale and haggard than the Gouls, that wander at night among graves; forgetful of himself and every one else, he broke through the midst of the slaves, fell prostrate at the foot of the sofa, beat his bosom, called himself "atrocious murderer!" and invoked upon his head a thousand imprecations; with a trembling hand he raised the veil that covered the countenance of Nouronihar, and, uttering a loud shriek, fell lifeless on the floor. The chief of the eunuchs dragged him off with horrible grimaces, and repeated as he went: "Ay, I foresaw she would play you some ungracious turn!"

No sooner was the Caliph gone than the Emir commanded biers to be brought, and forbad that any one should enter the harem. Every window was fastened, all instruments of music were broken, and the Imans began to recite their prayers; towards the close of this melancholy day Vathek sobbed in silence, for they had been forced to compose with anodynes his convulsions of rage and desperation.

At the dawn of the succeeding morning the

wide folding doors of the palace were set open, and the funeral procession moved forward for the mountain. The wailful cries of "La Ilah illa Alla!" reached to the Caliph, who was eager to cicatrise himself and attend the ceremonial; nor could he have been dissuaded, had not his excessive weakness disabled him from walking; at the few first steps he fell on the ground, and his people were obliged to lay him on a bed, where he remained many days in such a state of insensibility, as excited compassion in the Emir himself.

When the procession was arrived at the grot of Meimoune, Shaban and Sutlememe dismissed the whole of the train, excepting the four confidential eunuchs who were appointed to remain. After resting some moments near the biers which had been left in the open air, they caused them to be carried to the brink of a small lake, whose banks were overgrown with a hoary moss; this was the great resort of herons and storks, which preyed continually on little blue fishes. The dwarfs instructed by the Emir soon repaired thither, and, with the help of the eunuchs, began to construct cabins of rushes and reeds, a work in which they had admirable skill; a magazine also was contrived for provisions, with a small

oratory for themselves, and a pyramid of wood neatly piled, to furnish the necessary fuel, for the air was bleak in the hollows of the mountains.

At evening two fires were kindled on the brink of the lake, and the two lovely bodies, taken from their biers, were carefully deposited upon a bed of dried leaves within the same cabin. The dwarfs began to recite the Koran with their clear shrill voices, and Shaban and Sutlememe stood at some distance, anxiously waiting the effects of the powder. At length Nouronihar and Gulchenrouz faintly stretched out their arms, and gradually opening their eyes, began to survey with looks of increasing amazement every object around them; they even attempted to rise, but, for want of strength fell back again; Sutlememe on this administered a cordial, which the Emir had taken care to provide.

Gulchenrouz, thoroughly aroused, sneezed out aloud, and raising himself with an effort that expressed his surprise, left the cabin, and inhaled the fresh air with the greatest avidity.

"Yes," said he, "I breathe again! again do I exist! I hear sounds! I behold a firmament spangled over with stars!"

Nouronihar, catching these beloved accents, extricated herself from the leaves, and

ran to clasp Gulchenrouz to her bosom. The first objects she remarked were their long simars, their garlands of flowers, and their naked feet; she hid her face in her hands to reflect; the vision of the enchanted bath, the despair of her father, and, more vividly than both, the majestic figure of Vathek recurred to her memory; she recollected also that herself and Gulchenrouz had been sick and dying; but all these images bewildered her mind. Not knowing where she was, she turned her eyes on all sides, as if to recognize the surrounding scene; this singular lake, those flames reflected from its glassy surface, the pale hues of its banks, the romantic cabins, the bullrushes that sadly waved their drooping heads, the storks whose melancholy cries blended with the shrill voices of the dwarfs, everything conspired to persuade them that the Angel of Death had opened the portal of some other world.

Gulchenrouz on his part, lost in wonder, clung to the neck of his cousin; he believed himself in the region of phantoms, and was terrified at the silence she preserved; at length addressing her:

"Speak," said he, "where are we? do you not see those spectres that are stirring the burning coals? are they Monker and Nakir,

come to throw us into them? does the fatal bridge cross this lake, whose solemn stillness perhaps conceals from us an abyss, in which for whole ages we shall be doomed incessantly to sink?"

"No, my children!" said Sutlememe, going towards them, "take comfort! the exterminating Angel, who conducted our souls hither after yours, hath assured us that the chastisement of your indolent and voluptuous life shall be restricted to a certain series of years, which you must pass in this dreary abode, where the sun is scarcely visible, and where the soil yields neither fruits nor flowers. These," continued she, pointing to the dwarfs, "will provide for our wants, for souls so mundane as ours retain too strong a tincture of their earthly extraction; instead of meats your food will be nothing but rice, and your bread shall be moistened in the fogs that brood over the surface of the lake."

At this desolating prospect the poor children burst into tears, and prostrated themselves before the dwarfs, who perfectly supported their characters, and delivered an excellent discourse of a customary length upon the sacred camel, which after a thousand years was to convey them to the paradise of the faithful.

The sermon being ended, and ablutions performed, they praised Alla and the prophet, supped very indifferently and retired to their withered leaves. Nouronihar and her little cousin consoled themselves on finding that, though dead, they yet lay in one cabin. Having slept well before, the remainder of the night was spent in conversation on what had befallen them, and both, from a dread of apparitions, betook themselves for protection to one another's arms.

In the morning, which was lowering and rainy, the dwarfs mounted high poles like minarets, and called them to prayers; the whole congregation, which consisted of Sutlememe, Shaban, the four eunuchs and some storks, were already assembled. The two children came forth from their cabin with a slow and dejected pace; as their minds were in a tender and melancholy mood, their devotions were performed with fervour. No sooner were they finished, than Gulchenrouz demanded of Sutlememe and the rest, "how they happened to die so opportunely for his cousin and himself?"

"We killed ourselves," returned Sutlememe, "in despair at your death."

On this, said Nouronihar, who, notwithstanding what was past, had not yet forgotten

her vision: "And the Caliph! is he also dead of his grief? and will he likewise come hither?"

The dwarfs, who were prepared with an answer, most demurely replied: "Vathek is damned beyond all redemption!"

"I readily believe so," said Gulchenrouz, "and am glad from my heart to hear it; for I am convinced it was his horrible look that sent us hither to listen to sermons and mess upon rice."

One week passed away on the side of the lake unmarked by any variety; Nouronihar ruminating on the grandeur of which death had deprived her, and Gulchenrouz applying to prayers and to panniers, along with the dwarfs, who infinitely pleased him.

Whilst this scene of innocence was exhibiting in the mountains, the Caliph presented himself to the Emir in a new light; the instant he recovered the use of his senses, with a voice that made Bababalouk quake, he thundered out: "Perfidious Giaour! I renounce thee for ever! it is thou who hast slain my beloved Nouronihar! and I supplicate the pardon of Mahomet, who would have preserved her to me had I been more wise; let water be brought to perform my ablutions, and let the pious Fakreddin be called to offer up his

prayers with mine, and reconcile me to him; afterwards we will go together and visit the sepulchre of the unfortunate Nouronihar; I am resolved to become a hermit, and consume the residue of my days on this mountain, in hope of expiating my crimes."

Nouronihar was not altogether so content, for though she felt a fondness for Gulchenrouz, who, to augment the attachment, had been left at full liberty with her, yet she still regarded him as but a bauble, that bore no competition with the carbuncle of Giamschid. At times she indulged doubts on the mode of her being, and scarcely could believe that the dead had all the wants and the whims of the living. To gain satisfaction however on so perplexing a topic, she arose one morning whilst all were asleep, with a breathless caution, from the side of Gulchenrouz, and, after having given him a soft kiss, began to follow the windings of the lake till it terminated with a rock, whose top was accessible though lofty; this she clambered up with considerable toil, and, having reached the summit, set forward in a run, like a doe that unwittingly follows her hunter; though she skipped along with the alertness of an antelope, yet at intervals she was forced to desist and rest beneath the tamarisks to recover her breath. Whilst she,

thus reclined, was occupied with her little reflections on the apprehension that she had some knowledge of the place, Vathek, who finding himself that morning but ill at ease had gone forth before the dawn, presented himself on a sudden to her view; motionless with surprise, he durst not approach the figure before him; which lay shrouded up in a simar, extended on the ground, trembling and pale, but yet lovely to behold. At length Nouronihar, with a mixture of pleasure and affliction, raising her fine eyes to him, said: "My lord! are you come hither to eat rice and hear sermons with me?"

"Beloved phantom!" cried Vathek; "dost thou speak? hast thou the same graceful form? the same radiant features? art thou palpable likewise?" and, eagerly embracing her, added: "Here are limbs and a bosom animated with a gentle warmth! what can such a prodigy mean?"

Nouronihar with diffidence answered: "You know, my lord, that I died on the night you honoured me with your visit; my cousin maintains it was from one of your glances, but I cannot believe him; for to me they seem not so dreadful. Gulchenrouz died with me, and we were both brought into a region of desolation, where we are fed with a wretched diet.

If you be dead also, and are come hither to join us, I pity your lot; for you will be stunned with the noise of the dwarfs and the storks; besides, it is mortifying in the extreme that you, as well as myself, should have lost the treasures of the subterranean palace."

At the mention of the subterranean palace the Caliph suspended his caresses, which indeed had proceeded pretty far, to seek from Nouronihar an explanation of her meaning. She then recapitulated her vision, what immediately followed, and the history of her pretended death, adding also a description of the place of expiation from whence she had fled, and all in a manner that would have extorted his laughter, had not the thoughts of Vathek been too deeply engaged. No sooner however had she ended, than he again clasped her to his bosom and said:

"Light of my eyes! the mystery is unravelled; we both are alive! your father is a cheat, who, for the sake of dividing, hath deluded us both; and the Giaour, whose design, as far as I can discover, is that we shall proceed together, seems scarce a whit better; it shall be some time at least before he find us in his palace of fire. Your lovely little person in my estimation is far more precious than all the treasures of the pre-adamite Sultans, and I

wish to possess it at pleasure, and in open day, for many a moon, before I go to burrow underground like a mole. Forget this little trifler, Gulchenrouz, and——"

"Ah! my lord!" interposed Nouronihar, "let me entreat that you do him no evil."

"No, no!" replied Vathek, "I have already bid you forbear to alarm yourself for him; he has been brought up too much on milk and sugar to stimulate my jealousy; we will leave him with the dwarfs, who by the bye are my old acquaintances; their company will suit him far better than yours. As to other matters, I will return no more to your father's; I want not to have my ears dinned by him and his dotards with the violation of the rites of hospitality; as if it were less an honour for you to espouse the Sovereign of the world than a girl dressed up like a boy!"

Nouronihar could find nothing to oppose in a discourse so eloquent; she only wished the amorous Monarch had discovered more ardour for the carbuncle of Giamschid; but flattered herself it would gradually increase, and therefore yielded to his will with the most bewitching submission.

When the Caliph judged it proper he called for Bababalouk, who was asleep in the cave of Meimoune, and dreaming that the phantom

of Nouronihar, having mounted him once more on her swing, had just given him such a jerk, that he one moment soared above the mountains, and the next sunk into the abyss; starting from his sleep at the voice of his master, he ran gasping for breath, and had nearly fallen backward at the sight, as he believed, of the spectre by whom he had so lately been haunted in his dream.

"Ah, my lord!" cried he, recoiling ten steps, and covering his eyes with both hands: "do you then perform the office of a goul! 'tis true you have dug up the dead, yet hope not to make her your prey; for after all she hath caused me to suffer she is even wicked enough to prey upon you."

"Cease thy folly," said Vathek, "and thou shalt soon be convinced that it is Nouronihar herself, alive and well, whom I clasp to my breast; go only and pitch my tents in the neighbouring valley; there will I fix my abode with this beautiful tulip, whose colours I soon shall restore; there exert thy best endeavours to procure whatever can augment the enjoyments of life, till I shall disclose to thee more of my will."

The news of so unlucky an event soon reached the ears of the Emir, who abandoned himself to grief and despair, and began, as did

all his old greybeards, to begrime his visage with ashes. A total supineness ensued, travellers were no longer entertained, no more plaisters were spread, and, instead of the charitable activity that had distinguished this asylum, the whole of its inhabitants exhibited only faces of a half cubit long, and uttered groans that accorded with their forlorn situation.

Though Fakreddin bewailed his daughter as lost to him for ever, yet Gulchenrouz was not forgotten. He despatched immediate instruction to Sutlememe, Shaban and the dwarfs, enjoining them not to undeceive the child in respect to his state, but, under some pretence, to convey him far from the lofty rock at the extremity of the lake, to a place which he should appoint, as safer from danger; for he suspected that Vathek intended him evil.

Gulchenrouz in the meanwhile was filled with amazement at not finding his cousin; nor were the dwarfs at all less surprised; but Sutlememe, who had more penetration, immediately guessed what had happened. Gulchenrouz was amused with the delusive hope of once more embracing Nouronihar in the interior recesses of the mountains, where the ground, strewed over with orange blossoms and jasmines, offered beds much more invit-

ing than the withered leaves in their cabin, where they might accompany with their voices the sounds of their lutes, and chase butterflies in concert. Sutlememe was far gone in this sort of description, when one of the four eunuchs beckoned her aside, to apprize her of the arrival of a messenger from their fraternity, who had explained the secret of the flight of Nouronihar, and brought the commands of the Emir. A council with Shaban and the dwarfs was immediately held; their baggage being stowed in consequence of it, they embarked in a shallop, and quietly sailed with the little one, who acquiesced in all their proposals; their voyage proceeded in the same manner till they came to the place where the lake sinks beneath the hollow of the rock; but as soon as the bark had entered it, and Gulchenrouz found himself surrounded with darkness, he was seized with a dreadful consternation, and incessantly uttered the most piercing outcries; for he now was persuaded he should actually be damned for having taken too many little freedoms in his lifetime with his cousin.

But let us return to the Caliph, and her who ruled over his heart. Bababalouk had pitched the tents, and closed up the extremities of the valley with magnificent screens of India cloth,

which were guarded by Ethiopian slaves with their drawn sabres; to preserve the verdure of this beautiful enclosure in its natural freshness, the white eunuchs went continually round it with their red water vessels. The waving of fans was heard near the imperial pavilion, where, by the voluptuous light that glowed through the muslins, the Caliph enjoyed at full view all the attractions of Nouronihar. Inebriated with delight, he was all ear to her charming voice which accompanied the lute; while she was not less captivated with his descriptions of Samarah and the tower full of wonders, but especially with his relation of the adventure of the ball, and the chasm of the Giaour with its ebony portal.

In this manner they conversed for a day and a night; they bathed together in a basin of black marble, which admirably relieved the fairness of Nouronihar. Bababalouk, whose good graces this beauty had regained, spared no attention that their repasts might be served up with the minutest exactness; some exquisite rarity was ever placed before them; and he sent even to Shiraz for that fragrant and delicious wine, which had been hoarded up in bottles prior to the birth of Mahomet; he had excavated little ovens in the rock to bake the nice manchets which were prepared by the

hands of Nouronihar, from whence they had derived a flavour so grateful to Vathek, that he regarded the ragouts of his other wives as entirely maukish; whilst they would have died at the Emir's of chagrin, at finding themselves so neglected, if Fakreddin, notwithstanding his resentment, had not taken pity upon them.

The Sultana Dilara, who till then had been the favourite, took this dereliction of the Caliph to heart with a vehemence natural to her character; for during her continuance in favour, she had imbibed from Vathek many of his extravagant fancies, and was fired with impatience to behold the superb tombs of Istakhar, and the palace of forty columns; besides, having been brought up amongst the Magi, she had fondly cherished the idea of the Caliph's devoting himself to the worship of fire; thus his voluptuous and desultory life with her rival was to her a double source of affliction. The transient piety of Vathek had occasioned her some serious alarms, but the present was an evil of far greater magnitude; she resolved therefore, without hesitation, to write to Carathis, and acquaint her that all things went ill; that they had eaten, slept and revelled at an old Emir's, whose sanctity was very formidable, and that after all, the prospect of possessing the treasures of the pre-

adamite Sultans was no less remote than before. This letter was entrusted to the care of two woodmen, who were at work on one of the great forests of the mountains, and, being acquainted with the shortest cuts, arrived in ten days at Samarah.

The Princess Carathis was engaged at chess with Morakanabad, when the arrival of these wood-fellers was announced. She, after some weeks of Vathek's absence had forsaken the upper regions of her tower, because everything appeared in confusion among the stars, whom she consulted relative to the fate of her son. In vain did she renew her fumigations, and extend herself on the roof to obtain mystic visions; nothing more could she see in her dreams than pieces of brocade, nosegays of flowers, and other unmeaning gewgaws. These disappointments had thrown her into a state of dejection, which no drug in her power was sufficient to remove; her only resource was in Morakanabad, who was a good man, and endowed with a decent share of confidence, yet whilst in her company he never thought himself on roses.

No person knew aught of Vathek, and a thousand ridiculous stories were propagated at his expense. The eagerness of Carathis may be easily guessed at receiving the letter,

as well as her rage at reading the dissolute conduct of her son. "Is it so?" said she; "either I will perish, or Vathek shall enter the palace of fire. Let me expire in flames, provided he may reign on the throne of Soliman!" Having said this, and whirled herself round in a magical manner, which struck Morakanabad with such terror as caused him to recoil, she ordered her great camel Alboufaki to be brought, and the hideous Nerkes with the unrelenting Cafour to attend. "I require no other retinue," said she to Morakanabad; "I am going on affairs of emergency, a truce therefore to parade! Take you care of the people, fleece them well in my absence; for we shall expend large sums, and one knows not what may betide."

The night was uncommonly dark, and a pestilential blast ravaged the plain of Catoul that would have deterred any other traveller, however urgent the call; but Carathis enjoyed most whatever filled others with dread. Nerkes concurred in opinion with her, and Cafour had a particular predilection for a pestilence. In the morning this accomplished caravan, with the wood-fellers who directed their route, halted on the edge of an extensive marsh, from whence so noxious a vapour arose as would have destroyed any animal but

Alboufaki, who naturally inhaled these malignant fogs. The peasants entreated their convoy not to sleep in this place.

"To sleep," cried Carathis, "what an excellent thought! I never sleep but for visions; and, as to my attendants, their occupations are too many to close the only eye they each have."

The poor peasants, who were not overpleased with their party, remained open-mouthed with surprise.

Carathis alighted, as well as her negresses, and severally stripping off their outer garments, they all ran in their drawers, to cull from those spots where the sun shone fiercest the venomous plants that grew on the marsh; this provision was made for the family of the Emir, and whoever might retard the expedition of Istakhar. The woodmen were overcome with fear when they beheld these three horrible phantoms run, and, not much relishing the company of Alboufaki, stood aghast at the command of Carathis to set forward, notwithstanding it was noon, and the heat fierce enough to calcine even rocks. In spite however of every remonstrance, they were forced implicitly to submit.

Alboufaki, who delighted in solitude, constantly snorted whenever he perceived himself

near a habitation; and Carathis, who was apt to spoil him with indulgence, as constantly turned him aside, so that the peasants were precluded from procuring subsistence; for the milch goats and ewes, which Providence had sent towards the district they traversed, to refresh travellers with their milk, all fled at the sight of the hideous animal and his strange riders. As to Carathis, she needed no common aliment, for her invention had previously furnished her with an opiate to stay her stomach, some of which she imparted to her mutes.

At the fall of night Alboufaki, making a sudden stop, stamped with his foot, which to Carathis, who understood his paces, was a certain indication that she was near the confines of some cemetery. The moon shed a bright light on the spot, which served to discover a long wall, with a large door in it standing ajar, and so high that Alboufaki might easily enter. The miserable guides, who perceived their end approaching, humbly implored Carathis, as she had now so good an opportunity, to inter them, and immediately gave up the ghost. Nerkes and Cafour, whose wit was of a style peculiar to themselves, were by no means parsimonious of it on the folly of these poor people, nor could anything have been

found more suited to their tastes than the site of the burying ground, and the sepulchres which its precincts contained; there were at least two thousand of them on the declivity of a hill; some in the form of pyramids, others like columns, and in short the variety of their shapes was endless. Carathis was too much immersed in her sublime contemplations to stop at the view, charming as it appeared in her eyes; pondering the advantages that might accrue from her present situation, she could not forbear to exclaim:

"So beautiful a cemetery must be haunted by gouls! and they want not for intelligence; having heedlessly suffered my guides to expire, I will apply for directions to them, and as an inducement will invite them to regale on these fresh corpses."

After this short soliloquy she beckoned to Nerkes and Cafour, and made signs with her fingers, as much as to say, "Go, knock against the sides of the tombs, and strike up your delightful warblings, that are so like to those of the guests whose company I wish to obtain."

The negresses, full of joy at the behests of their mistress, and promising themselves much pleasure from the society of the gouls, *went with* an air of conquest, and began their

knockings at the tombs; as their strokes were repeated a hollow noise was heard in the earth, the surface hove up into heaps, and the gouls on all sides protruded their noses, to inhale the effluvia, which the carcasses of the woodmen began to emit.

They assembled before a sarcophagus of white marble, where Carathis was seated between the bodies of her miserable guides; the Princess received her visitants with distinguished politeness, and, when supper was ended, proceeded with them to business. Having soon learnt from them everything she wished to discover, it was her intention to set forward forthwith on her journey, but her negresses, who were forming tender connections with the gouls, importuned her with all their fingers, to wait at least till the dawn. Carathis however, being chastity in the abstract, and an implacable enemy to love and repose, at once rejected their prayer, mounted Alboufaki, and commanded them to take their seats in a moment; four days and four nights she continued her route, without turning to the right hand or left; on the fifth she traversed the mountains and half-burnt forests, and arrived on the sixth before the beautiful screens which concealed from all eyes the voluptuous wanderings of her son.

It was day-break, and the guards were snoring on their posts in careless security, when the rough trot of Alboufaki awoke them in consternation. Imagining that a group of spectres ascended from the abyss was approaching, they all without ceremony took to their heels. Vathek was at that instant with Nouronihar in the bath, hearing tales, and laughing at Bababalouk who related them; but no sooner did the outcry of his guards reach him, than he flounced from the water like a carp, and as soon threw himself back at the sight of Carathis, who, advancing with her negresses upon Alboufaki, broke through the muslin awnings and veils of the pavilion; at this sudden apparition Nouronihar (for she was not at all times free from remorse) fancied that the moment of celestial vengeance was come, and clung about the Caliph in amorous despondence.

Carathis, still seated on her camel, foamed with indignation at the spectacle which obtruded itself on her chaste view; she thundered forth without check or mercy: "Thou double-headed and four-legged monster! what means all this winding and writhing? art thou not ashamed to be seen grasping this limber sapling, in preference to the sceptre of the *pre-adamite* Sultans? is it then for this paltry

doxy that thou hast violated the conditions in the parchment of our Giaour? is it on her thou hast lavished thy precious moments? is this the fruit of the knowledge I have taught thee? is this the end of thy journey? tear thyself from the arms of this little simpleton, drown her in the water before me, and instantly follow my guidance."

In the first ebullition of his fury Vathek resolved to make a skeleton of Alboufaki, and to stuff the skins of Carathis and her blacks; but the ideas of the Giaour, the palace of Istakhar, the sabres and the talismans, flashing before his imagination with the simultaneousness of lightning, he became more moderate, and said to his mother, in a civil but decisive tone: "Dread lady! you shall be obeyed, but I will not drown Nouronihar; she is sweeter to me than a Myrabolan comfit, and is enamoured of carbuncles, especially that of Giamschid, which hath also been promised to be conferred upon her; she therefore shall go along with us, for I intend to repose with her beneath the canopies of Soliman; I can sleep no more without her."

"Be it so!" replied Carathis, alighting, and at the same time committing Alboufaki to the charge of her women.

Nouronihar, who had not yet quitted her

hold, began to take courage, and said with an accent of fondness to the Caliph: "Dear Sovereign of my soul! I will follow thee, if it be thy will, beyond the Kaf in the land of the Afrits; I will not hesitate to climb for thee the nest of the Simurgh, who, this lady expected, is the most awful of created existences."

"We have here then," subjoined Carathis, "a girl both of courage and science!"

Nouronihar had certainly both; but, notwithstanding all her firmness, she could not help casting back a look of regret upon the graces of her little Gulchenrouz, and the days of tenderness she had participated with him; she even dropped a few tears, which Carathis observed, and inadvertently breathed out with a sigh: "Alas! my gentle cousin! what will become of him?"

Vathek at this apostrophe knitted up his brows, and Carathis inquired what it could mean?

"She is preposterously sighing after a stripling with languishing eyes and soft hair, who loves her," said the Caliph.

"Where is he?" asked Carathis. "I must be acquainted with this pretty child; for," added she, lowering her voice, "I design before I depart to regain the favour of the

Giaour; there is nothing so delicious in his estimation as the heart of a delicate boy, palpitating with the first tumults of love."

Vathek, as he came from the bath, commanded Bababalouk to collect the women and other moveables of his harem, embody his troops, and hold himself in readiness to march in three days; whilst Carathis retired alone to a tent, where the Giaour solaced her with encouraging visions; but at length waking, she found at her feet Nerkes and Cafour, who informed her by their signs, that having led Alboufaki to the borders of a lake, to browse on some moss that looked tolerably venomous, they had discovered certain blue fishes of the same kind with those in the reservoir on the top of the tower.

"Ah! ha!" said she, "I will go thither to them; these fish are past doubt of a species that, by a small operation, I can render oracular; they may tell me where this little Gulchenrouz is, whom I am bent upon sacrificing." Having thus spoken, she immediately set out with her swarthy retinue.

It being but seldom that time is lost in the accomplishment of a wicked enterprise, Carathis and her negresses soon arrived at the lake, where, after burning the magical drugs with which they were always provided, they, strip-

ping themselves naked, waded to their chins, Nerkes and Cafour waving torches around them, and Carathis pronouncing her barbarous incantations. The fishes with one accord thrust forth their heads from the water, which was violently rippled by the flutter of their fins, and, at length finding themselves constrained by the potency of the charm, they opened their piteous mouths, and said: "From gills to tail we are yours, what seek ye to know?"

"Fishes," answered she, "I conjure you, by your glittering scales, tell me where now is Gulchenrouz?"

"Beyond the rock," replied the shoal in full chorus; "will this content you? for we do not delight in expanding our mouths."

"It will," returned the Princess; "I am not to learn that you like not long conversations; I will leave you therefore to repose, though I had other questions to propound." The instant she had spoken the water became smooth, and the fishes at once disappeared.

Carathis, inflated with the venom of her projects, strode hastily over the rock, and found the amiable Gulchenrouz asleep in an arbour, whilst the two dwarfs were watching at his side, and ruminating their accustomed prayers. These diminutive personages pos-

sessed the gift of divining whenever an enemy to good Mussulmans approached; thus they anticipated the arrival of Carathis, who, stopping short, said to herself: "How placidly doth he recline his lovely little head! how pale and languishing are his looks! it is just the very child of my wishes!"

The dwarfs interrupted this delectable soliloquy by leaping instantly upon her, and scratching her face with their utmost zeal. But Nerkes and Cafour, betaking themselves to the succour of their mistress, pinched the dwarfs so severely in return, that they both gave up the ghost, imploring Mahomet to inflict his sorest vengeance upon this wicked woman and all her household.

At the noise which this strange conflict occasioned in the valley Gulchenrouz awoke, and, bewildered with terror, sprung impetuously upon an old fig-tree that rose against the acclivity of the rocks; from thence gained their summits, and ran for two hours without once looking back. At last, exhausted with fatigue, he fell as if dead into the arms of a good old Genius, whose fondness for the company of children had made it his sole occupation to protect them, and who, whilst performing his wonted rounds through the air, happening on the cruel Giaour at the instant of

his growling in the horrible chasm, rescued the fifty little victims which the impiety of Vathek had devoted to his maw; these the Genius brought up in nests still higher than the clouds, and himself fixed his abode in a nest more capacious than the rest, from which he had expelled the possessors that had built it.

These inviolable asylums were defended against the Dives and the Afrits by waving streamers on which were inscribed, in characters of gold that flashed like light[illegible] the names of Alla and the Prophet[illegible]ere that Gulchenrouz, who as yet r[illegible]ide-ceived with respect to his pretended death, thought himself in the mansions of eternal peace; he admitted without fear the congratulations of his little friends, who were all assembled in the nest of the venerable Genius, and vied with each other in kissing his serene forehead and beautiful eyelids. This he found to be the state congenial to his soul; remote from the inquietudes of earth, the impertinence of harems, the brutality of eunuchs, and the lubricity of women; in this peaceable society his days, months and years glided on; nor was he less happy than the rest of his companions; for the Genius, instead of burthening his pupils with perishable riches and the

vain sciences of the world, conferred upon them the boon of perpetual childhood.

Carathis, unaccustomed to the loss of her prey, vented a thousand execrations on her negresses for not seizing the child, instead of amusing themselves with pinching to death the dwarfs, from which they could gain no advantage. She returned into the valley murmuring, and finding that her son was not risen from the arms of Nouronihar, discharged her ill-humour upon both. The idea how[redacted]arting next day for Istakhar, and [redacted] through the good offices of the Giaour, an intimacy with Eblis himself, at length consoled her chagrin. But fate had ordained it otherwise.

In the evening, as Carathis was conversing with Dilara, who, through her contrivance, had become of the party, and whose taste resembled her own, Bababalouk came to acquaint her, "that the sky towards Samarah looked of a fiery red, and seemed to portend some alarming disaster." Immediately, recurring to her astrolabes and instruments of magic, she took the altitude of the planets and discovered by her calculations, to her great mortification, that a formidable revolt had taken place at Samarah; that Motavakel, availing himself of the disgust which was in-

veterate against his brother, had incited commotions amongst the populace, made himself master of the palace, and actually invested the great tower, to which Morakanabad had retired, with a handful of the few that still remained faithful to Vathek.

"What!" exclaimed she; "must I lose then my tower! my mutes! my negresses! my mummies! and, worse than all, the laboratory in which I have spent so many a night! without knowing at least if my hair-brained son will complete his adventure? No! I will not be the dupe! Immediately will I speed to support Morakanabad; by my formidable art the clouds shall sleet hailstones in the faces of the assailants, and shafts of red-hot iron on their heads; I will spring mines of serpents and torpedoes from beneath them, and we shall soon see the stand they will make against such an explosion!"

Having thus spoken Carathis hastened to her son, who was tranquilly banqueting with Nouronihar in his superb carnation-coloured tent.

"Glutton that thou art!" cried she, "were it not for me, thou wouldst soon find thyself the commander only of pies. Thy faithful subjects have abjured the faith they swore to thee; Motavakel thy brother now reigns on

the hill of pied horses, and had I not some slight resources in the tower, would not be easily persuaded to abdicate; but, that time may not be lost, I shall only add four words: Strike tent to-night, set forward, and beware how thou loiterest again by the way; though thou hast forfeited the conditions of the parchment, I am not yet without hope; for it cannot be denied that thou hast violated to admiration the laws of hospitality, by seducing the daughter of the Emir after having partaken of his bread and his salt. Such a conduct cannot but be delightful to the Giaour; and if on thy march thou canst signalize thyself by an additional crime, all will still go well, and thou shalt enter the palace of Soliman in triumph. Adieu! Alboufaki and my negresses are waiting."

The Caliph had nothing to offer in reply; he wished his mother a prosperous journey, and eat on till he had finished his supper. At midnight the camp broke up, amidst the flourishing of trumpets and other martial instruments; but loud indeed must have been the sound of the tymbals to overpower the blubbering of the Emir and his long-beards, who, by an excessive profusion of tears, had so far exhausted the radical moisture, that their eyes shrivelled up in their sockets, and

their hairs dropped off by the roots. Nouronihar, to whom such a symphony was painful, did not grieve to get out of hearing; she accompanied the Caliph in the imperial litter, where they amused themselves with imagining the splendour which was soon to surround them. The other women, overcome with dejection, were dolefully rocked in their cages, whilst Dilara consoled herself with anticipating the joy of celebrating the rites of fire on the stately terraces of Istakhar.

In four days they reached the spacious valley of Rocnabad. The season of spring was in all its vigour, and the grotesque branches of the almond trees in full blossom fantastically chequered the clear blue sky; the earth, variegated with hyacinths and jonquils, breathed forth a fragrance which diffused through the soul a divine repose; myriads of bees and scarce fewer of Santons, had there taken up their abode; on the banks of the stream hives and oratories were alternately ranged, and their neatness and whiteness were set off by the deep green of the cypresses that spired up amongst them. These pious personages amused themselves with cultivating little gardens that abounded with flowers and fruits, especially musk-melons of the best *flavour* that Persia could boast; sometimes

dispersed over the meadow, they entertained themselves with feeding peacocks whiter than snow, and turtles more blue than the sapphire; in this manner were they occupied when the harbingers of the imperial procession began to proclaim: "Inhabitants of Rocnabad! prostrate yourselves on the brink of your pure waters, and tender your thanksgivings to heaven that vouchsafeth to show you a ray of its glory; for lo! the Commander of the faithful draws near."

The poor Santons, filled with holy energy, having bustled to light up wax torches in their oratories and expand the Koran on their ebony desks, went forth to meet the Caliph with baskets of honeycomb, dates and melons. But, whilst they were advancing in solemn procession and with measured steps, the horses, camels and guards wantoned over their tulips and other flowers, and made a terrible havoc amongst them. The Santons could not help casting from one eye a look of pity on the ravages committing around them, whilst the other was fixed upon the Caliph and heaven. Nouronihar, enraptured with the scenery of a place which brought back to her remembrance the pleasing solitudes where her infancy had passed, entreated Vathek to stop; but he, suspecting that each oratory

might be deemed by the Giaour a distinct habitation, commanded his pioneers to level them all; the Santons stood motionless with horror at the barbarous mandate, and at last broke out into lamentations; but these were uttered with so ill a grace, that Vathek bade his eunuchs to kick them from his presence. He then descended from the litter with Nouronihar; they sauntered together in the meadow, and amused themselves with culling flowers, and passing a thousand pleasantries on each other. But the bees, who were staunch Mussulmans, thinking it their duty to revenge the insult on their dear masters the Santons, assembled so zealously to do it with effect, that the Caliph and Nouronihar were glad to find their tents prepared to receive them.

Bababalouk, who in capacity of purveyor had acquitted himself with applause as to peacocks and turtles, lost no time in consigning some dozens to the spit, and as many more to be fricasseed. Whilst they were feasting, laughing, carousing, and blaspheming at pleasure on the banquet so liberally furnished, the Moullahs, the Sheiks, the Cadis and Imans of Shiraz (who seemed not to have met the Santons) arrived, leading by bridles of riband *inscribed* from the Koran, a train of asses,

which were loaded with the choicest fruits the country could boast; having presented their offerings to the Caliph, they petitioned him to honour their city and mosques with his presence.

"Fancy not," said Vathek, "that you can detain me; your presents I condescend to accept, but beg you will let me be quiet, for I am not over-fond of resisting temptation; retire then; yet, as it is not decent for personages so reverend to return on foot, and as you have not the appearance of expert riders, my eunuchs shall tie you on your asses, with the precaution that your backs be not turned towards me, for they understand etiquette."

In this deputation were some high-stomached sheiks, who, taking Vathek for a fool, scrupled not to speak their opinion. These Bababalouk girded with double cords, and, having well disciplined their asses with nettles behind, they all started with a preternatural alertness, plunging, kicking and running foul of each other in the most ludicrous manner imaginable.

Nouronihar and the Caliph mutually contended who should most enjoy so degrading a sight; they burst out in volleys of laughter to see the old men and their asses fall into the stream; the leg of one was fractured, the

shoulder of another dislocated, the teeth of a third dashed out, and the rest suffered still worse.

Two days more, undisturbed by fresh embassies, having been devoted to the pleasures of Rocnabad, the expedition proceeded, leaving Shiraz on the right, and verging towards a large plain, from whence were discernible on the edge of the horizon the dark summits of the mountains of Istakhar.

At this prospect the Caliph and Nouronihar were unable to repress their transports; they bounded from their litter to the ground, and broke forth into such wild exclamations, as amazed all within hearing. Interrogating each other, they shouted, "Are we not approaching the radiant palace of light? or gardens more delightful than those of Sheddad?" Infatuated mortals! they thus indulged delusive conjecture, unable to fathom the decrees of the Most High!

The good Genii, who had not totally relinquished the superintendence of Vathek, repairing to Mahomet in the seventh heaven, said: "Merciful Prophet! stretch forth thy propitious arms towards thy Vicegerent, who is ready to fall irretrievably into the snare which his enemies, the Dives, have prepared to destroy him; the Giaour is awaiting his ar-

rival in the abominable palace of fire, where, if he once set his foot, his perdition will be inevitable."

Mahomet answered with an air of indignation: "He hath too well deserved to be resigned to himself, but I permit you to try if one effort more will be effectual to divert him from pursuing his ruin."

One of these beneficent Genii, assuming without delay the exterior of a shepherd, more renowned for his piety than all the Derviches and Santons of the region, took his station near a flock of white sheep on the slope of a hill, and began to pour forth from his flute such airs of pathetic melody, as subdued the very soul, and, awakening remorse, drove far from it every frivolous fancy. At these energetic sounds the sun hid himself beneath a gloomy cloud, and the waters of two little lakes, that were naturally clearer than crystal, became of a colour like blood. The whole of this superb assembly was involuntarily drawn towards the declivity of the hill; with downcast eyes they all stood abashed, each upbraiding himself with the evil he had done; the heart of Dilara palpitated, and the chief of the eunuchs with a sigh of contrition implored pardon of the women, whom for his own satisfaction he had so often tormented.

Vathek and Nouronihar turned pale in their litter, and, regarding each other with haggard looks, reproached themselves—the one with a thousand of the blackest crimes, a thousand projects of impious ambition—the other with the desolation of her family, and the perdition of the amiable Gulchenrouz. Nouronihar persuaded herself that she heard in the fatal music the groans of her dying father, and Vathek, the sobs of the fifty children he had sacrificed to the Giaour. Amidst these complicated pangs of anguish they perceived themselves impelled towards the shepherd, whose countenance was so commanding, that Vathek for the first time felt overawed, whilst Nouronihar concealed her face with her hands.

The music paused, and the Genius, addressing the Caliph, said: "Deluded Prince! to whom Providence hath confided the care of innumerable subjects, is it thus that thou fulfillest thy mission? Thy crimes are already completed, and art thou now hastening towards thy punishment? Thou knowest that beyond these mountains Eblis and his accursed Dives hold their infernal empire; and, seduced by a malignant phantom, thou art proceeding to surrender thyself to them! This moment is the last of grace allowed thee;

abandon thy atrocious purpose; return; give back Nouronihar to her father, who still retains a few sparks of life; destroy thy tower with all its abominations; drive Carathis from thy councils; be just to thy subjects; respect the ministers of the Prophet; compensate for thy impieties by an exemplary life; and, instead of squandering thy days in voluptuous indulgence, lament thy crimes on the sepulchres of thy ancestors. Thou beholdest the clouds that obscure the sun; at the instant he recovers his splendour, if thy heart be not changed, the time of mercy assigned thee will be past for ever."

Vathek, depressed with fear, was on the point of prostrating himself at the feet of the shepherd, whom he perceived to be of a nature superior to man; but, his pride prevailing, he audaciously lifted his head, and, glancing at him one of his terrible looks, said: "Whoever thou art, withhold thy useless admonitions; thou wouldst either delude me, or art thyself deceived. If what I have done be so criminal as thou pretendest, there remains not for me a moment of grace; I have traversed a sea of blood to acquire a power which will make thy equals tremble; deem not that I shall retire when in view of the port, or that I will relinquish her who is dearer to me than

either my life or thy mercy. Let the sun appear! let him illumine my career! it matters not where it may end." On uttering these words, which made even the Genius shudder, Vathek threw himself into the arms of Nouronihar, and commanded that his horses should be forced back to the road.

There was no difficulty in obeying these orders, for the attraction had ceased; the sun shone forth in all his glory, and the shepherd vanished with a lamentable scream.

The fatal impression of the music of the Genius remained notwithstanding in the heart of Vathek's attendants; they viewed each other with looks of consternation; at the approach of night almost all of them escaped, and of this numerous assemblage there only remained the chief of the eunuchs, some idolatrous slaves, Dilara and a few other women, who, like herself, were votaries of the religion of the Magi.

The Caliph, fired with the ambition of prescribing laws to the Intelligences of Darkness, was but little embarrassed at this dereliction; the impetuosity of his blood prevented him from sleeping, nor did he encamp any more as before. Nouronihar, whose impatience if possible exceeded his own, importuned him to hasten his march, and lavished on him a thou-

sand caresses to beguile all reflection; she fancied herself already more potent than Balkis, and pictured to her imagination the Genii falling prostrate at the foot of her throne. In this manner they advanced by moonlight, till they came within view of the two towering rocks that form a kind of portal to the valley, at whose extremity rose the vast ruins of Istakhar. Aloft on the mountain glimmered the fronts of various royal mausoleums, the horror of which was deepened by the shadows of night. They passed through two villages almost deserted, the only inhabitants remaining being a few feeble old men, who, at the sight of horses and litters, fell upon their knees and cried out;

"O heaven! is it then by these phantoms that we have been for six months tormented? Alas! it was from the terror of these spectres and the noise beneath the mountains, that our people have fled, and left us at the mercy of maleficent spirits!"

The Caliph, to whom these complaints were but unpromising auguries, drove over the bodies of these wretched old men, and at length arrived at the foot of the terrace of black marble; there he descended from his litter, handing down Nouronihar; both with beating hearts stared wildly around them, and

expected with an apprehensive shudder the approach of the Giaour; but nothing as yet announced his appearance.

A deathlike stillness reigned over the mountain and through the air; the moon dilated on a vast platform the shades of the lofty columns, which reached from the terrace almost to the clouds; the gloomy watch-towers, whose numbers could not be counted, were veiled by no roof, and their capitals, of an architecture unknown in the records of the earth, served as an asylum for the birds of darkness, which, alarmed at the approach of such visitants, fled away croaking.

The chief of the eunuchs, trembling with fear, besought Vathek that a fire might be kindled.

"No!" replied he, "there is no time left to think of such trifles; abide where thou art, and expect my commands."

Having thus spoken he presented his hand to Nouronihar, and, ascending the steps of a vast staircase, reached the terrace, which was flagged with squares of marble, and resembled a smooth expanse of water, upon whose surface not a leaf ever dared to vegetate; on the right rose the watch-towers, ranged before the ruins of an immense palace, whose walls were embossed with various figures; in front

stood forth the colossal forms of four creatures, composed of the leopard and the griffin; and, though but of stone, inspired emotions of terror; near these were distinguished by the splendour of the moon, which streamed full on the place, characters like those on the sabres of the Giaour, that possessed the same virtue of changing every moment; these, after vacillating for some time, at last fixed in Arabic letters, and prescribed to the Caliph the following words:

"Vathek! thou hast violated the conditions of my parchment, and deservest to be sent back; but, in favour to thy companion, and as the meed for what thou hast done to obtain it, EBLIS permitteth that the portal of his palace shall be opened, and the subterranean fire will receive thee into the number of its adorers."

He scarcely had read these words before the mountain against which the terrace was reared trembled, and the watch-towers were ready to topple headlong upon them; the rock yawned, and disclosed within it a staircase of polished marble that seemed to approach the abyss; upon each stair were planted two large torches, like those Nouronihar had seen in her vision, the camphorated vapour ascending from which gathered into a cloud under the hollow of the vault.

This appearance, instead of terrifying, gave new courage to the daughter of Fakreddin. Scarcely deigning to bid adieu to the moon and the firmament, she abandoned without hesitation the pure atmosphere to plunge into these infernal exhalations. The gait of those impious personages was haughty and determined; as they descended by the effulgence of the torches they gazed on each other with mutual admiration, and both appeared so resplendent, that they already esteemed themselves spiritual Intelligences; the only circumstance that perplexed them was their not arriving at the bottom of the stairs; on hastening their descent with an ardent impetuosity, they felt their steps accelerated to such a degree, that they seemed not walking, but falling from a precipice. Their progress however was at length impeded by a vast portal of ebony, which the Caliph without difficulty recognized; here the Giaour awaited them with the key in his hand.

"Ye are welcome," said he to them with a ghastly smile, "in spite of Mahomet and all his dependants. I will now admit you into that palace where you have so highly merited a place."

Whilst he was uttering these words he touched the enamelled lock with his key, and

the doors at once expanded, with a noise still louder than the thunder of mountains, and as suddenly recoiled the moment they had entered.

The Caliph and Nouronihar beheld each other with amazement, at finding themselves in a place which, though roofed with a vaulted ceiling, was so spacious and lofty that at first they took it for an immeasurable plain. But their eyes at length growing familiar to the grandeur of the objects at hand, they extended their view to those at a distance, and discovered rows of columns and arcades, which gradually diminished till they terminated in a point, radiant as the sun when he darts his last beams athwart the ocean; the pavement, strewed over with gold dust and saffron, exhaled so subtle an odour as almost overpowered them; they however went on, and observed an infinity of censers, in which ambergris and the wood of aloes were continually burning; between the several columns were placed tables, each spread with a profusion of viands, and wines of every species sparkling in vases of crystal. A throng of Genii and other fantastic spirits of each sex danced lasciviously in troops, at the sound of music which issued from beneath.

In the midst of this immense hall a vast

multitude was incessantly passing, who severally kept their right hands on their hearts, without once regarding anything around them; they had all the livid paleness of death; their eyes, deep sunk in their sockets, resembled those phosphoric meteors that glimmer by night in places of interment. Some stalked slowly on, absorbed in profound reverie; some, shrieking with agony, ran furiously about, like tigers wounded with poisoned arrows; whilst others, grinding their teeth in rage, foamed along, more frantic than the wildest maniac. They all avoided each other, and, though surrounded by a multitude that no one could number, each wandered at random, unheedful of the rest, as if alone on a desert which no foot had trodden.

Vathek and Nouronihar, frozen with terror at a sight so baleful, demanded of the Giaour what these appearances might mean, and why these ambulating spectres never withdrew their hands from their hearts.

"Perplex not yourselves," replied he bluntly, "with so much at once, you will soon be acquainted with all; let us haste and present you to Eblis."

They continued their way through the multitude, but, notwithstanding their confidence

at first, they were not sufficiently composed to examine with attention the various perspectives of halls and of galleries that opened on the right hand and left, which were all illuminated by torches and braziers, whose flames rose in pyramids to the centre of the vault. At length they came to a place where long curtains, brocaded with crimson and gold, fell from all parts in striking confusion; here the choirs and dances were heard no longer, the light which glimmered came from afar.

After some time Vathek and Nouronihar perceived a gleam brightening through the drapery, and entered a vast tabernacle carpeted with the skins of leopards; an infinity of elders with streaming beards, and Afrits in complete armour, had prostrated themselves before the ascent of a lofty eminence, on the top of which, upon a globe of fire, sat the formidable Eblis. His person was that of a young man, whose noble and regular features seemed to have been tarnished by malignant vapours; in his large eyes appeared both pride and despair; his flowing hair retained some resemblance to that of an angel of light; in his hand, which thunder had blasted, he swayed the iron sceptre that causes the monster Ouranabad, the Afrits, and all the powers of the abyss to tremble; at his presence the

heart of the Caliph sunk within him, and for the first time, he fell prostrate on his face. Nouronihar however, though greatly dismayed, could not help admiring the person of Eblis; for she expected to have seen some stupendous Giant. Eblis, with a voice more mild than might be imagined, but such as transfused through the soul the deepest melancholy, said:

"Creatures of clay, I receive you into mine empire; ye are numbered amongst my adorers; enjoy whatever this palace affords; the treasures of the pre-adamite Sultans, their bickering sabres, and those talismans that compel the Dives to open the subterranean expanses of the mountain of Kaf, which communicate with these; there, insatiable as your curiosity may be, shall you find sufficient to gratify it; you shall possess the exclusive privilege of entering the fortress of Aherman, and the halls of Argenk, where are portrayed all creatures endowed with intelligence, and the various animals that inhabited the earth prior to the creation of that contemptible being, whom ye denominate the Father of Mankind."

Vathek and Nouronihar, feeling themselves revived and encouraged by this harangue, eagerly said to the Giaour:

"Bring us instantly to the place which contains these precious talismans."

"Come!" answered this wicked Dive, with his malignant grin, "come! and possess all that my Sovereign hath promised, and more."

He then conducted them into a long aisle adjoining the tabernacle, preceding them with hasty steps, and followed by his disciples with the utmost alacrity. They reached, at length, a hall of great extent, and covered with a lofty dome, around which appeared fifty portals of bronze, secured with as many fastenings of iron; a funereal gloom prevailed over the whole scene; here, upon two beds of incorruptible cedar, lay recumbent the fleshless forms of the Pre-adamite Kings, who had been monarchs of the whole earth; they still possessed enough of life to be conscious of their deplorable condition; their eyes retained a melancholy motion; they regarded each other with looks of the deepest dejection; each holding his right hand motionless on his heart; at their feet were inscribed the events of their several reigns, their power, their pride, and their crimes; Soliman Raad, Soliman Daki, and Soliman Di Gian Ben Gian, who, after having chained up the Dives in the dark caverns of Kaf, became so presumptuous

as to doubt of the Supreme Power; all these maintained great state, though not to be compared with the eminence of Soliman Ben Daoud.

This king, so renowned for his wisdom, was on the loftiest elevation, and placed immediately under the dome; he appeared to possess more animation than the rest; though from time to time he laboured with profound sighs, and, like his companions, kept his right hand on his heart; yet his countenance was more composed, and he seemed to be listening to the sullen roar of a vast cataract, visible in part through the grated portals; this was the only sound that intruded on the silence of these doleful mansions. A range of brazen vases surrounded the elevation.

"Remove the covers from these cabalistic depositaries," said the Giaour to Vathek, "and avail thyself of the talismans, which will break asunder all these gates of bronze; and not only render thee master of the treasures contained within them, but also of the spirits by which they are guarded."

The Caliph, whom this ominous preliminary had entirely disconcerted, approached the vases with faltering footsteps, and was ready to sink with terror when he heard the groans of Soliman. As he proceeded a voice

from the livid lips of the Prophet articulated these words:

"In my life-time I filled a magnificent throne, having on my right hand twelve thousand seats of gold, where the patriarchs and the prophets heard my doctrines; on my left the sages and doctors, upon as many thrones of silver, were present at all my decisions. Whilst I thus administered justice to innumerable multitudes, the birds of the air librating over me served as a canopy from the rays of the sun; my people flourished, and my palace rose to the clouds; I erected a temple to the Most High, which was the wonder of the universe; but I basely suffered myself to be seduced by the love of women, and a curiosity that could not be restrained by sublunary things; I listened to the counsels of Aherman and the daughter of Pharaoh, and adored fire and the hosts of heaven; I forsook the holy city, and commanded the Genii to rear the stupendous palace of Istakhar, and the terrace of the watch-towers, each of which was consecrated to a star; there for a while I enjoyed myself in the zenith of glory and pleasure; not only men, but supernatural existences were subject also to my will. I began to think, as these unhappy monarchs around had already thought, that the vengeance of Heaven was

asleep; when at once the thunder burst my structures asunder and precipitated me hither; where however I do not remain, like the other inhabitants, totally destitute of hope, for an angel of light hath revealed that, in consideration of the piety of my early youth, my woes shall come to an end when this cataract shall for ever cease to flow; till then I am in torments, ineffable torments! an unrelenting fire preys on my heart."

Having uttered this exclamation Soliman raised his hands towards Heaven, in token of supplication, and the Caliph discerned through his bosom, which was transparent as crystal, his heart enveloped in flames. At a sight so full of horror Nouronihar fell back, like one petrified, into the arms of Vathek, who cried out with a convulsive sob:

"O Giaour! whither hast thou brought us? Allow us to depart, and I will relinquish all thou hast promised. O Mahomet! remains there no more mercy?"

"None! none!" replied the malicious Dive. "Know miserable prince! thou art now in the abode of vengeance and despair; thy heart also will be kindled, like those of the other votaries of Eblis. A few days are allotted thee previous to this fatal period; employ them as thou wilt; recline on these heaps

of gold; command the Infernal Potentates; range at thy pleasure through these immense subterranean domains; no barrier shall be shut against thee; as for me, I have fulfilled my mission; I now leave thee to thyself." At these words he vanished.

The Caliph and Nouronihar remained in the most abject affliction; their tears unable to flow, scarcely could they support themselves. At length, taking each other despondingly by the hand, they went faltering from this fatal hall, indifferent which way they turned their steps; every portal opened at their approach; the Dives fell prostrate before them; every reservoir of riches was disclosed to their view; but they no longer felt the incentives of curiosity, pride or avarice. With like apathy they heard the chorus of Genii, and saw the stately banquets prepared to regale them; they went wandering on from chamber to chamber, hall to hall, and gallery to gallery, all without bounds or limit, all distinguishable by the same lowering gloom, all adorned with the same awful grandeur, all traversed by persons in search of repose and consolation, but who sought them in vain; for, every one carried within him a heart tormented in flames: shunned by these various sufferers, who seemed by their looks to be up-

braiding the partners of their guilt, they withdrew from them to wait in direful suspense the moment which should render them to each other the like objects of terror.

"What!" exclaimed Nouronihar; "will the time come when I shall snatch my hand from thine?"

"Ah!" said Vathek; "and shall my eyes ever cease to drink from thine long draughts of enjoyment! Shall the moments of our reciprocal ecstasies be reflected on with horror! It was not thou that broughtest me hither; the principles by which Carathis perverted my youth, have been the sole cause of my perdition!" Having given vent to these painful expressions, he called to an Afrit, who was stirring up one of the braziers, and bade him fetch the Princess Carathis from the palace of Samarah.

After issuing these orders, the Caliph and Nouronihar continued walking amidst the silent crowd, till they heard voices at the end of the gallery; presuming them to proceed from some unhappy beings, who like themselves were awaiting their final doom, they followed the sound, and found it to come from a small square chamber, where they discovered sitting on sofas five young men of goodly

figure, and a lovely female, who were all holding a melancholy conversation by the glimmering of a lonely lamp; each had a gloomy and forlorn air, and two of them were embracing each other with great tenderness. On seeing the Caliph and the daughter of Fakreddin enter, they arose, saluted and gave them place; then he who appeared the most considerable of the group addressed himself thus to Vathek.

"Strangers! who doubtless are in the same state of suspense with ourselves, as you do not yet bear your hand on your heart, if you are come hither to pass the interval allotted previous to the infliction of our common punishment, condescend to relate the adventures that have brought you to this fatal place, and we in return will acquaint you with ours, which deserve but too well to be heard; we will trace back our crimes to their source; though we are not permitted to repent, this is the only employment suited to wretches like us!"

The Caliph and Nouronihar assented to the proposal, and Vathek began, not without tears and lamentations, a sincere recital of every circumstance that had passed. When the afflicting narrative was closed, the young

man entered on his own.* Each person proceeded in order, and when the fourth prince had reached the midst of his adventures, a sudden noise interrupted him, which caused the vault to tremble and to open.

Immediately a cloud descended, which gradually dissipating, discovered Carathis on the back of an Afrit, who grievously complained of his burden. She, instantly springing to the ground, advanced towards her son and said:

"What dost thou here in this little square chamber? As the Dives are become subject to thy beck, I expected to have found thee on the throne of the Pre-adamite Kings."

"Execrable woman!" answered the Caliph; "cursed be the day thou gavest me birth! go, follow this Afrit, let him conduct thee to the hall of the Prophet Soliman; there thou wilt learn to what these palaces are destined, and how much I ought to abhor the impious knowledge thou hast taught me."

"The height of power, to which thou art

*See note to the Author's French preface; Beckford has here added the titles of three stories related in the Hall of Eblis. This is all that he has done, the three titles given, being inserted in the third French edition, but not in the English preface, between the paragraphs separated by an asterisk. Beckford does not appear ever to have proceeded further with these tales than the titles.

arrived, has certainly turned thy brain," answered Carathis; "but I ask no more than permission to show my respect for the Prophet. It is however proper thou shouldest know, that (as the Afrit has informed me neither of us shall return to Samarah) I requested his permission to arrange my affairs, and he politely consented; availing myself therefore of the few moments allowed me, I set fire to the tower, and consumed in it the mutes, negresses, and serpents which have rendered me so much good service; nor should I have been less kind to Morakanabad, had he not prevented me, by deserting at last to thy brother. As for Bababalouk, who had the folly to return to Samarah, and all the good brotherhood to provide husbands for thy wives, I undoubtedly would have put them to the torture, could I but have allowed them the time; being however in a hurry, I only hung him after having caught him in a snare with thy wives, whilst them I buried alive by the help of my negresses, who thus spent their last moments greatly to their satisfaction. With respect to Dilara, who ever stood high in my favour, she hath evinced the greatness of her mind by fixing herself near in the service of one of the Magi, and I think will soon be our own."

Vathek, too much cast down to express the indignation excited by such a discourse, ordered the Afrit to remove Carathis from his presence, and continued immersed in thought, which his companion durst not disturb.

Carathis however eagerly entered the dome of Soliman, and, without regarding in the least the groans of the Prophet, undauntedly removed the covers of the vases, and violently seized on the talismans; then, with a voice more loud than had hitherto been heard within these mansions, she compelled the Dives to disclose to her the most secret treasures, the most profound stores, which the Afrit himself had not seen; she passed by rapid descents known only to Eblis and his most favoured potentates, and thus penetrated the very entrails of the earth, where breathes the Sansar, or icy wind of death; nothing appalled her dauntless soul; she perceived however in all the inmates who bore their hands on their heart a little singularity, not much to her taste. As she was emerging from one of the abysses, Eblis stood forth to her view, but, notwithstanding he displayed the full effulgence of his infernal majesty, she preserved her countenance unaltered, and even paid her compliments with considerable firmness.

This superb Monarch thus answered:

"Princess, whose knowledge and whose crimes have merited a conspicuous rank in my empire, thou dost well to employ the leisure that remains; for the flames and torments, which are ready to seize on thy heart, will not fail to provide thee with full employment." He said this, and was lost in the curtains of his tabernacle.

Carathis paused for a moment with surprise; but, resolved to follow the advice of Eblis, she assembled all the choirs of Genii, and all the Dives, to pay her homage; thus marched she in triumph through a vapour of perfumes, amidst the acclamations of all the malignant spirits, with most of whom she had formed a previous acquaintance; she even attempted to dethrone one of the Solimans for the purpose of usurping his place, when a voice, proceeding from the abyss of Death, proclaimed, "All is accomplished!" Instantaneously the haughty forehead of the intrepid Princess was corrugated with agony; she uttered a tremendous yell, and fixed, no more to be withdrawn, her right hand upon her heart, which was become a receptacle of eternal fire.

In this delirium, forgetting all ambitious projects and her thirst for that knowledge which should ever be hidden from mortals,

she overturned the offerings of the Genii, and, having execrated the hour she was begotten and the womb that had borne her, glanced off in a whirl that rendered her invisible, and continued to revolve without intermission.

At almost the same instant the same voice announced to the Caliph, Nouronihar, the five princes, and the princess, the awful and irrevocable decree. Their hearts immediately took fire, and they at once lost the most precious of the gifts of heaven—Hope. These unhappy beings recoiled with looks of the most furious distraction; Vathek beheld in the eyes of Nouronihar nothing but rage and vengeance, nor could she discern aught in his but aversion and despair. The two princes who were friends, and till that moment had preserved their attachment, shrunk back, gnashing their teeth with mutual and unchangeable hatred. Kalilah and his sister made reciprocal gestures of imprecation, whilst the two other princes testified their horror for each other by the most ghastly convulsions, and screams that could not be smothered. All severally plunged themselves into the accursed multitude, there to wander in an eternity of unabating anguish.

Such was, and such should be, the punishment of unrestrained passions and atrocious

actions! Such is, and such should be, the chastisement of blind ambition, that would transgress those bounds which the Creator hath prescribed to human knowledge; and, by aiming at discoveries reserved for pure Intelligence, acquire that infatuated pride, which perceives not the condition appointed to man is to be ignorant and humble.

Thus the Caliph Vathek, who, for the sake of empty pomp and forbidden power, had sullied himself with a thousand crimes, became a prey to grief without end, and remorse without mitigation; whilst the humble and despised Gulchenrouz passed whole ages in undisturbed tranquillity, and the pure happiness of childhood.

Notes

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CALIPH. This title amongst the Mahometans comprehends the concrete character of prophet, priest, and king, and is used to signify the Vicar of God on earth. Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 9; Herbelot, p. 985.

One of his eyes became so terrible. The author of Nighiaristan hath preserved a fact that supports this account; and there is no history of Vathek in which his terrible eye is not mentioned.

Omar Ben Abdalasis. This caliph was eminent above all others for temperance and self-denial, insomuch that he is believed to have been raised to Mahomet's bosom, as a reward for his abstinence in an age of corruption. Herbelot, p. 690.

P. 14. *Samarah.* A city of the Babylonian Irak, supposed to have stood on the site where Nimrod erected his tower. Khondemir relates, in his life of Motassem, that this prince, to terminate the disputes which were perpetually happening between the inhabitants of Bagdat and his Turkish slaves, withdrew from thence, and, having fixed on a situation in the plain of Catoul, there founded Samarah; he is said to have had in the stables of this city a hundred and thirty thousand pied horses, each of which carried by his order a sack of earth to a place he had chosen; by this accumulation an elevation was

formed that commanded a view of all Samarah, and served for the foundation of his magnificent palace. Herbelot, p. 752, 808, 985; Anecdotes Arabes, p. 413.

In the most delightful succession. The great men of the East have been always fond of music. Though forbidden by the Mahometan religion, it commonly makes a part of every entertainment; female slaves are generally kept to amuse them and the ladies of their harems. The Persian Khanyagere seems nearly to have resembled our old English minstrel, as he usually accompanied his barbut, or lute, with heroic songs; their musicians appear to have known the art of moving the passions, and to have generally directed their music to the heart. Al Farabi, a philosopher, who died about the middle of the tenth century, on his return from the pilgrimage of Mecca, introduced himself, though a stranger, at the court of Seifeddoula, sultan of Syria; musicians were accidentally performing, and he joined them; the prince admired him, and wished to hear something of his own; he drew a composition from his pocket, and distributing the parts amongst the band, the first movement threw the prince and his courtiers into violent laughter, the next melted all into tears, and the last lulled even the performers asleep. Richardson's Dissertation on the Languages, &c. of Eastern Nations, p. 211.

Mani. This artist, whom Inatulla of Delhi styles the far-famed, lived in the reign of Schabur, or Sapor, the son of Ardichir Babegan, was founder of the sect of Manicheans, and by profession a painter and sculptor; his pretensions, supported by an uncommon skill in mechanical contrivances, induced the ignorant to believe that his powers were more than human. After having secluded himself from

his followers, under the pretence of passing a year in Heaven, he produced a wonderful volume, which he affirmed to have brought from thence, containing images and figures of a marvellous nature. Herbelot, p. 548. It appears from the Arabian Nights that Haroun Al Raschid, Vathek's grandfather, had adorned his palace and furnished his magnificent pavilion with the most capital performances of the Persian artists.

P. 15. *Houris.* The Virgins of Paradise, called from their large black eyes,[1] *Hur al oyun.* An intercourse with these, according to the institution of Mahomet, is to constitute the principal felicity of the faithful; not formed of clay like mortal women, they

[1] Might not Akenside's expression:

In the dark heaven of Mira's eye——

have been suggested by the eyes of the Virgins of Paradise?

The enthusiasm of the acute Winckelmann for the statuary of the ancients was apt to mislead both his judgment and taste. What but such a bias could induce him to maintain—after asserting that Homer meant by the word βοωπις, to characterise the beauty of Juno's eyes, and citing with approbation μελανοφθαλμος—καλη το προσωπον as the gloss of the Scholiast upon it—that the epithet the poet had selected was designed by him to express, not what it naturally imports, but a sense independent of it, and which it could only be supposed to imply, from being placed in an absurd connexion? The eye of the animal to which the term belongs is no doubt large, if referred to the human countenance, but not properly so in its own situation. Had Homer applied βοωπις to the statue of Juno, βοωπις (as the Abbé contends) must have been interpreted large eyed, because in this relation no idea except that of magnitude (unless we add prominence) could possibly be extorted from it; but it must be allowed, on the same principle, that an epithet taken from the eye of the ass, or any other creature's of equal size, whatever were its color, would have

are deemed in the highest degree beautiful, and exempt from every inconvenience incident to the sex. Al Koran; passim.

P.16. *It was not with the orthodox that he usually held.* Vathek persecuted with extreme rigour all who defended the eternity of the Koran, which the Sonnites, or orthodox, maintained to be uncreated, and the Motazalites and Schiites as strenuously denied. Herbelot, p. 85, &c.

Mahomet in the seventh Heaven. In this heaven the paradise of Mahomet is supposed to be placed contiguous to the throne of Alla. Hagi Khalfah relates that Ben Iatmaiah, a celebrated Doctor of Damascus, had the temerity to assert that, when the Most High erected his throne, he reserved a vacant place for Mahomet upon it.

Genii. Genn or Ginn in the Arabic signifies a genius or demon, a being of a higher order, and formed of more subtile matter than man. According to Oriental mythology, the genii governed the world long before the creation of Adam; the Mahometans regarded them as an intermediate race between angels and men, and capable of salvation, whence Mahomet pretended a commission to convert them. Consonant to this, we read that when the servant of

become the statue of the goddess as well, and signified precisely the same. On such commentators a poet might justly exclaim:

——— Pol, me occidistis, amici,
Non servastis!

In their descriptions of female beauty, the poets of the east frequently use the same image with Homer, and exactly in his sense: thus, in particular, Lebeid: "A company of maidens were seated in their vehicles, with black eyes and graceful motions, like the wild heifers of Tudah."

God stood up to invoke him, it wanted little but that the Genii had pressed on him in crowds to hear him rehearse the Koran. Herbelot, p. 375; Al Koran, ch. 72.

Assist him to complete the tower. The genii, who were styled by the Persians peries and dives, were famous for their architectural skill; the pyramids of Egypt have been ascribed to them, and we are told of a strange fortress which they constructed in the remote mountains of Spain, whose frontal presented the following inscription:

It is no light task to disclose the portal of this asylum:
The bolt, rash passenger, is not of iron, but the tooth of a furious dragon:
Know thou that no one can break this charm
Till Destiny shall have consign'd the key to his advent'rous hand.

The Koran relates that the genii were employed by Solomon in the erection of his magnificent temple. Bailly sur l'Atlantide, p. 146; Herbelot, p. 8; Al Koran, ch. 34.

P. 19. *The stranger displayed such rarities as he had never before seen.* In the Tales of Inatulla we meet with a traveller who like this was furnished with trinkets and curiosities of an extraordinary kind; that such were much sought after in the days of Vathek may be concluded from the encouragement which Haroun Al Raschid gave to the mechanic arts, and the present he sent by his ambassadors to Charlemagne; this consisted of a clock, which when put into motion by means of a clepsydrum, not only pointed out the hours in their round, but also by dropping small balls on a bell struck them, and at the same instant threw open as many little doors to let

out an equal number of horsemen; besides these the clock displayed various other contrivances. Ann. Reg. Franc. Pip. Caroli, &c. ad ann. 807; Weidler, p. 205.

P. 19. *Characters on the sabres.* Such inscriptions often occur in Eastern romances; we find in the Arabian Nights a cornelian, on which unknown characters were engraven, and also a sabre like those here described. In the French King's library is a curious treatise, intitled *Sefat Alaclam*, containing a variety of alphabets arranged under different heads, such as the prophetic, the mystical, the philosophic, the magical, the talismanic, &c. which seems to have escaped the research of the indefatigable Mr. Astle. Arabian Nights, vol. ii. p. 246, vol. i. p. 143; Herbelot, p. 797.

P. 22. *Endeavoured by her conversation to heal and compose him.* The same sanative quality is ascribed to soothing conversation, both by Æschylus and Milton:

> Οργης νοσουσης εισιν ιατροι λογοι.
>
> *Prometh.* v. 378.
>
> —Apt words have power to suage
> The tumours of a troubled mind;
> And are as balm to fester'd wounds.
>
> *Samson Agon.* v. 184.

P. 25. *Beards burnt off.* The loss of the beard from the earliest ages was accounted highly disgraceful; an instance occurs in the Tales of Inatulla of one being singed off, as a mulct on the owner for having failed to explain a question propounded, and in the Arabian Nights a proclamation may be seen similar to this of Vathek. Vol. i. p. 268, vol. ii. p. 228.

P. 27. *Robes of honour and sequins of gold.* Such rewards were common in the East. See particularly Arabian Nights, vol. ii. p. 72, 125, vol. iii. p. 64.

The old man put on his green spectacles. This is an apparent anachronism, but such frequently occur in reading the Arabian writers; it should be remembered, the difficulty of ascertaining facts and fixing the dates of inventions must be considerable in a vast extent of country, where books are comparatively few, and the art of printing unpractised; though the origin of spectacles can be traced back with certainty no higher than the thirteenth century, yet the observation of Seneca, that letters appeared of an increased magnitude when viewed through the medium of convex glass, might have been noted also by others, and a sort of spectacles contrived in consequence of it; but however this might have been, the art of staining glass is sufficiently ancient to have suggested in the days of Vathek the use of green as a protection to the eye from a glare of light.

P. 28. *The stars which he went to consult.* The phrase of the original corresponds with the Greek expression, Αστρα Βιαζεσθαι, which in another view will illustrate St. Matthew, xi. 12.

P. 31. *To drink at will of the Four Fountains, which were reputed in the highest degree salubrious, and sacred to himself*, or literally, to be of gold and sacred to himself. Agathocles (cited by Athenæus, l. xi. p. 515) relates that "there were certain fountains in these regions to the number of seventy, whose waters were denominated golden, and of which it was death for any one to drink save the king and his eldest son." In this number, as appears from our author's epithet, the Four Fountains were formerly reckoned, whose waters, as Vathek had no son, were sacred to

his own use. The citation from Agathocles may likewise explain the wish of King David "for water from the well of Bethlehem," unless we suppose it to have arisen from a predilection like that of the Parthian monarchs for the water of Choaspes, which was carried with them wherever they went, and from that circumstance styled by Tibullus *regia lympha*, and by Milton

The drink of none but kings.

Bowls of rock crystal. In the Arabian Nights Schemselnihar and Ebn Thaker were served by three of their attendants, each bringing them a goblet of rock crystal filled with curious wine.

Accursed Giaour. Dives of this kind are frequently mentioned by Eastern writers; consult their tales in general, and especially those of the Fisherman, Aladdin, and the Princess of China.

P. 32. *Drink this draught, said the stranger, as he presented a phial.* A phial of a similar potion is ordered to be instantaneously drank off in one of the Tales of Inatulla. "These brewed enchantments" have been used in the East from the days of Homer. Milton in his Comus describes one of them, which greatly resembles the Indian's:

> And first behold this cordial julep here,
> That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
> With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.
> Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
> In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
> Is of such pow'r to stir up joy as this;
> To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.

P. 33. *The poets applied them as a chorus to all the songs they composed.* Sir John Chardin, describing a public entertainment and rejoicing, observes that

the most ingenious poets in Persia (as is related of Homer) sung their own works, which for the most part are in praise of the king, whom they fail not to extol, let him be never so worthy of blame and oblivion; the songs of this day were adapted to the occasion of the festival, which was the restoration of the prime minister to his office—he adds, "I saw one that abounded in fine and witty turns, the burthen of which was this:

Him set aside, all men but equals are;
E'en Sol survey'd the spacious realms of air,
To see if he could find another star,
A star, that like the polar star could reign,
And long he sought it, but he sought in vain."*

The ingenuity of the poet seems to consist in an allusion to the prime minister's title, Ivon Medave, or the Pole of Persia.

Bababalouk, the chief of his eunuchs. As it was the employment of the black eunuchs to wait upon and guard the sultanas, so the general superintendence of the harem was particularly committed to their chief. Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, pp. 155, 6.

P. 35. *The Divan.* This was both the supreme council and court of justice, at which the caliphs of the race of the Abassides assisted in person to redress the injuries of every appellant. Herbelot, p. 298.

The officers arranged themselves in a semicircle. Such was the etiquette constantly observed on entering the Divan. Arabian Nights, vol. iv. p. 36; Herbelot, p. 912.

The prime vizir. Vazir, vezir, or as we express it,

* See Lloyd's Introduction to a Collection of Voyages and Travels never before published in English, p. 21.

vizir, literally signifies a porter, and by metaphor the minister who bears the principal burthen of the state.

P. 37. *The Indian, being short and plump, collected himself into a ball, &c.* Happy as Horace has been in his description of the wise man, the figurative expressions which finish the character are literally applicable to our author's Indian:—

> in seipso totus, teres atque rotundus;
> Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari:
> In quem manca ruit semper fortuna.

P. 38. *The Meuzins and their minarets.* Valid, the son of Abdalmalek, was the first who erected a minaret or turret, and this he placed on the grand Mosque at Damascus, for the meuzin or crier to announce from it the hour of prayer. Herbelot, p. 576.

P. 42. *The subterranean palace of fire.* Of this palace, which is frequently mentioned in Eastern romance, a full description will be found in the sequel.

P. 44. *I require the blood of fifty of the most beautiful sons of thy vizirs.* Amongst the infatuated votaries of the powers of darkness, the most acceptable offering was the blood of their children; if the parents were not at hand to make an immediate offer, the magistrates did not fail to select those who were most fair and promising, that the demon might not be defrauded of his dues. On one occasion two hundred of the prime nobility were sacrificed together. Bryant's Observations, p. 279, &c.

P. 48. *Give them me, cried the Indian.* In the story of Codadad and his brother, we read of a black like this who fed upon human blood. Arabian Nights, vol. iii. p. 199.

P. 48. *With the grin of an ogre.* Thus in the His-

tory of the Punished Vizir: "The prince heard enough to convince him of his danger, and then perceived that the lady who called herself the daughter of an Indian king was an ogress, wife to one of those savage demons called an ogre, who stay in remote places, and make use of a thousand wiles to surprise and devour passengers." Arabian Nights, vol. i. p. 56.

Bracelet. The bracelet, in the East, was an emblem of royalty. Herbelot, p. 541.—For want of a more proper term to denominate the ornament *serkhooj*, the word *aigret* is here used.

P. 52. *Mutes.* It has been usual in eastern courts from time immemorial, to retain a number of mutes; these are not only employed to amuse the monarch, but also to instruct his pages in an art to us little known, of communicating everything by signs, lest the sounds of their voices should disturb the sovereign. Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 164.—The mutes are also the secret instruments of his private vengeance.

P. 54. *Prayer announced at break of day.* The stated seasons of public prayer in the twenty-four hours were five; daybreak, noon, mid-time between noon and sunset, immediately as the sun leaves the horizon, and an hour and half after it is down.

P. 54. *Mummies. Moumia* (from *Moum*, wax and tallow) signifies the flesh of the human body preserved in the sand, after having been embalmed and wrapped in cerements; they are frequently found in the sepulchres of Egypt, but most of the oriental mummies are brought from a cavern near Abin, in Persia. Herbelot, p. 647.

Rhinoceros' horns. Of their extraordinary qualities and application a curious account may be seen in the Bibliothèque Orientale, and the Supplement to it.

Skulls and Skeletons. Both were usually added to the ingredients already mentioned. These magic rites sufficiently resemble the witch scenes of Middleton, Shakespeare, &c., to show their oriental origin; nor is it to be wondered if, amongst the many systems adopted from the East, this should have been in the number. It may be seen from the Arabian Tales that magic was an art publicly taught; and Father Angelo relates of a rich enchanter whom he knew at Bassora, that his pupils were so numerous as to occupy an entire quarter of the city.

P. 61. *Flagons of wine, and vases of sherbet floating on snow.* Sir John Chardin speaks of a wine much admired in the East, and particularly in Persia, called *roubnar*, which is made from the juice of the pomegranate, and sent abroad in large quantities. The oriental sherbets, styled by St. Jerome *sorbitiunculæ delicatæ*, consisted of various syrups (such as lemon, liquorice, capillaire, &c.) mixed with water; to these Hasselquist adds several others, and observes that the sweet-scented violet is a flower greatly esteemed, not only for its smell and colour, but especially for its use in sherbet, which, when the Easterns intend to entertain their guests in an elegant manner, is made of a solution of violet sugar. Snow, in the rinfrescos of a hot climate, is almost a constant ingredient; thus in the Arabian Nights, Bedreddin Hassan, having filled a large porcelain bowl with sherbet of roses, put snow into it.

A lamb stuffed with pistachios. The same dish is mentioned in the Tale of the Barber's Sixth Brother.

A parchment. Parchments of the like mysterious import are frequent in the writings of the Easterns. One in particular amongst the Arabians is held in high veneration; it was written by Ali and Giafar

Sadek in mystic characters, and is said to contain the destiny of the Mahometan religion, and the great events which are to happen previous to the end of the world; this parchment is of camel's skin; but it was usual with Catherine of Medicis to carry about her person a legend in cabalistic characters, inscribed on the skin of a dead-born infant. Herbelot, p. 366; Wraxall's House of Valois.

Istakhar. This city was the ancient Persepolis and capital of Persia, under the kings of the three first races. The author of Lebtarikh writes that Kischtab there established his abode, erected several temples to the element of fire, and hewed out for himself and his successors sepulchres in the rocks of the mountain contiguous to the city. The ruins of columns and broken figures which still remain, defaced as they were by Alexander, and mutilated by time, plainly evince that those ancient potentates had chosen it for the place of their interment; their monuments however must not be confounded with the superb palace reared by queen Homai in the midst of Istakhar, which the Persians distinguished by the name of *Tchilminar*, or the forty watch-towers. The origin of this city is ascribed by some to Giamschid, and others carry it higher; but the Persian tradition is that it was built by the peris or fairies when the world was governed by Gian Ben Gian. Herbelot, p. 327.

Gian Ben Gian. By this appellation was distinguished the monarch of that species of beings whom the Arabians denominate *gian* or *ginn*, that is *genii*, and the Tarikh Thabari, *peris*, *feez*, or *fairies;* he was renowned for his warlike expeditions and stupendous structures; according to oriental writers the pyramids of Egypt were amongst the monuments of

his power. The buckler of this mighty sovereign, no less famous than that of Achilles, was employed by three successive Solimans to achieve their marvellous exploits; from them it descended to Tahamurath, surnamed Divbend, or Conqueror of the Giants. This buckler was endowed with most wonderful qualities, having been fabricated by talismanic art, and was alone sufficient to destroy all the charms and enchantments of demons or giants, which on the contrary were wrought by magic. Hence we are no longer at a loss for the origin of the wonderful shield of Atlante. The reign of Gian Ben Gian over the peris is said to have continued for two thousand years, after which Eblis was sent by the Deity to exile them on account of their disorders, and confine them in the remotest region of the earth. Herbelot, p. 396; Bailly sur l'Atlantide, p. 147.

The talismans of Soliman. Amongst the most famous talismans of the East, and which could control even the arms and magic of the dives or giants, was *mohur Solimani,* the seal or ring of Soliman Jared, fifth monarch of the world after Adam; by means of it the possessor had the entire command, not only of the elements, but also of demons and every created being. Richardson's Dissertat, p. 272; Herbelot, p. 820.

Preadamite Sultans. These monarchs, which were seventy-two in number, are said to have governed each a distinct species of rational beings prior to the existence of Adam. Amongst the most renowned of them were Soliman Raad, Soliman Daki, and Soliman Di Gian Ben Gian. Herbelot, p. 820.

Beware how thou enterest any dwelling. Strange as this injunction may seem, it is by no means incongruous to the customs of the country. Dr. Pococke

mentions his travelling with the train of the governor of Faiume, who, instead of lodging in a village that was near, passed the night in a grove of palm trees. Travels, vol. i. p. 56.

P. 63. *Every bumper, which they ironically quaffed to the health of Mahomet.* There are innumerable proofs that the Grecian custom, συμπινειν κυαθιζομενους, prevailed amongst the Arabs; but, had these been wanted, Carathis could not be supposed a stranger to it; the practice was to hail the gods in the first place, and then those who were held in the highest veneration; this they repeated as often as they drank; thus St. Ambrose: "Quid obtestationes potantium loquar? quid memorem sacramenta, quæ violare nefas arbitrantur? Bibamus, inquiunt, pro *salute imperatorum;* et *qui non biberit, sit reus indevotionis.*"

The ass of Balaam, the dog of the seven sleepers, and the other animals admitted into the paradise of Mahomet. It was a tenet of the Mussulman creed that all animals would be raised again, and many of them honoured with admission to paradise. The story of the seven sleepers, borrowed from Christian legends, was this: In the days of the Emperor Decius there were certain Ephesian youths of a good family, who, to avoid the flames of persecution, fled to a secret cavern, and there slept for a number of years. In their flight towards the cave they were followed by a dog, which, when they attempted to drive him back, said: "I love those who are dear unto God; go sleep therefore, and I will guard you." For this dog the Mahometans retain so profound a reverence, that their harshest sarcasm against a covetous person is, "he would not throw a bone to the dog of the seven sleepers." It is even said, that their superstition induces them to write his name upon the letters they

send to a distance, as a kind of talisman to secure them a safe conveyance. Religious Ceremonies, vol. vii. p. 74, n.; Sale's Koran, ch. xviii. and notes.

Painting the eyes of the Circassians. It was an ancient custom in the East, and still continues, to tinge the eyes of women, particularly those of a fair complexion, with an impalpable powder prepared chiefly from crude antimony, and called *surmeh.* Ebni'l Motezz, in a passage translated by Sir W. Jones, hath not only ascertained its purple colour, but also likened the violet to it:

Viola collegit folia sua, similia
Collyrio nigro, quod bibit lachrymas die discessûs,
Velut si esset super vasa in quibus fulgent
Primæ ignis flammulæ in sulphuris extremis partibus.

This pigment, when applied to the inner surface of the lids, communicates to the eye (especially if seen by the light of lamps) so tender and fascinating a languor as no language is competent to express.* Hence the epithet ἰοβλεφαρος, attributed by the Greeks† to the goddess of Beauty, and the Arabian

* When Tasso represents Love as ambushed

sotto all' ombra
Delle palpebre

he allegorically alludes to that appearance in nature, which the artifice here described was meant to counterfeit.

† Both Homer and Hesiod have applied ἐλικοβλεφαρος to *Venus*, in a synonymous sense, as is evident from Pliny, who, amongst other properties of the helix, minutely specifies its *purplish* flowers. This ὑπογραφη οφθαλμων will likewise explain ἐλικωπις.

Winkelmann and Grævius have each given different interpretations, but let them both speak for themselves: "Ἑλικο βλεφαρος caractérise des yeux dont les paupieres ont un mouve-

comparison of "the eyelids of a fine woman bathed in tears, to violets dropping with dew." Perhaps also Shakespeare's

violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes

should be ultimately referred to the same origin; but however this may be, it is obvious (though his commentators have overlooked it) that Anacreon alluded to the same cosmetic when he required of the painter that the eyelids of his mistress's portrait should, like her own, exhibit this appearance.

Εχετω δ', ὁπως εκεινη,
Βλεφαρος ιτυν κελαινην,

and her eye both the bright citron* of *Minerva's*, and the dewy radiance † of Cytherea's

ment ondoyant que le poëte compare au jeune ceps de la vigne."—*Hist. de l'Art de l'Antiq.* tom. ii., p. 135. "Ελικοβλεφαροι et ελικωπιδες puellæ Græcis dicuntur, qui sunt mobili oculorum petulantia, ut Petron, loquitur, sive quæ habent, ut idem dicit:

blandos oculos et inquietos
Et quadam propria nota loquaces.

Qui hinc Ovidio dicuntur arguti. Aliter plerique sentiunt, et exponunt: nigros oculos habentes. Sed ea vera est quam dixi hujus vocis notio, quam facile pluribus confirmarem, nisi res ipsa loqueretur."—*Lectiones Hesiodeæ*, cap. xx.

* "Eyen, bright citrin."—CHAUCER. No expression can be less exact than blue-eyed when used as the characteristic of Minerva, nor any perhaps more so than Chaucer's; unless γλαυκωπις be literally rendered.

† Ὑγρος'—ὁ ευκαταφορος, εις τας ἡδονας, ῥευματιζομενος.—*Gloss. Bibl. Coislin.*

Tasso, in his Jerusalem, has well paraphrased the import of this epithet:

Qual raggio in onda, le scintilla un riso
Negli umidi occhj tremulo et lascivo.

Το δε βλεμμα νυν αληθως
Απο του πυρος ποιησον·
Αμα γλαυκον, ως αθηνης·
Αμα δ' ὑγρον, ως κυθηρης.*

P. 64. *Rocnabad.* The stream thus denominated flows near the city of Shiraz; its waters are uncommonly pure and limpid, and their banks swarded with the finest verdure. Its praises are celebrated by Hafez in an animated song, which Sir W. Jones has admirably translated:

Boy, let yon liquid ruby flow,
And bid thy pensive heart be glad;
Whate'er the frowning zealots say,
Tell them their Eden cannot show
A stream so clear as Rocnabad,
A bower so sweet as Mosellay.†

Do you, with the advice of my mother, govern. Females in the east were not anciently excluded from power. In the story of Zeyn Alasnam and the King of the Genii, the mother of Zeyn undertakes, with the aid of his vizirs, to govern Balsora during his absence on a similar expedition.

P. 66. *Chintz and muslin.* For many curious particulars relative to these articles, consult Mr. Delaval's Inquiry concerning the changes of colours, &c., to which may be added, Lucret. lib. iv. 5; Petron. c. 37; Martial, viii. ep. 28, 17, xiv. ep. 150; Plutarch in Vita Catonis; Plin. viii. 48.

Serpents and scorpions. Various accounts are given of the magical applications of these animals, and the power of sorcerers over them, to which even Solo-

*Ode xxviii. 18; 2 Kings ix. 30; Ezek. xxiii. 40; Herbelot p. 832. Lady M. W. Montagu's Letters, let. xxix.

† Mosella was an oratory on the banks of Rocnabad.

mon referred. Sir John Chardin relates, that at Surat an Armenian, having seen some of these creatures crawl and twine over the naked bodies of children belonging to the charmers, daringly hazarded the same experiment, but it soon proved fatal to him, for he was bitten, and died in the space of two hours.

She amused herself in curing their wounds. Clorin, in the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher, possessed the like skill:

> Of all green wounds I know the remedies,
> In men or cattle; be they stung with snakes,
> Or charm'd with powerful words of wicked art;
> * * * * *
> These I can cure.

Moullahs. Those amongst the Mahometans who were bred to the law had this title; and from their order the judges of cities and provinces were taken.

The sacred Caaba. That part of the Temple at Mecca which is chiefly revered, and indeed gives a sanctity to the rest, is a square stone building called the Caaba, probably from its quadrangular form; the length of this edifice from north to south is twenty-four cubits, and its breadth from east to west twenty-three; the door is on the east side, and stands about four cubits from the ground, the floor being level with the threshold. The Caaba has a double roof, supported internally by three octangular pillars of aloes-wood, between which on a bar of iron hangs a row of silver lamps; the outside is covered with rich black damask, adorned with an embroidered band of gold; this hanging, which is changed every year, was formerly sent by the caliphs. Sale's Preliminary Discourse, p. 152.

P. 69. *Bababalouk almost sunk with confusion, whilst, &c.* The heinousness of Vathek's profanation can only be judged of by an orthodox Mussulman, or one who recollects the ablution and prayer indispensably required on the exoneration of nature. Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 139; Al Koran, ch. 4; Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 93.

The tapestry that hung before the door. This kind of curtain, at first restricted to the serail or palace, was afterwards adopted by the great, and gradually became of general use. The author of Leb Tarikh relates that Lohorashb, king of Persia, having granted to the great officers of his household and army the privilege of giving audience on seats of gold, reserved to himself the right of the *seraperdeh*, or curtain, which was hung before the throne to conceal him from the eyes of his subjects, and thereby preserve their reverence for his person. In later times, the daughter of a law professor, who occasionally in her father's absence filled his chair, had recourse to the same expedient, lest the charms of her face should distract her pupils' attention. Abbé de Sade's Memoirs de Petrarque, tom. i. p. 42.

The supposed oratory. The dishonouring such places as had an appearance of being devoted to religious purposes, by converting them to the most abject offices of nature, was an Oriental method of expressing contempt, and hath continued from remote antiquity. Harmer's Observations, vol. ii. p. 493.

Regale these pious poor souls with my good wine from Shiraz. The prohibition of wine in the Koran is so rigidly observed by the conscientious, especially if they have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, that they deem it sinful to press grapes for the purpose of

making it, and even to use the money arising from its sale. Chardin, Voy. de Perse, tom. ii. p. 212. Shiraz was famous in the East for its wines of different sorts, but particularly for its red, which was esteemed more highly than even the white wine of Kismische.

P. 70. *The Caliph, to enjoy so flattering a sight, supped gaily on the roof.* Dr. Pocock relates that he was entertained at Galilee by the steward of the Sheik, with whom he supped on the top of the house. From a similar motive to Vathek's, Nebuchadnezzar is represented by Daniel as contemplating his capital from the summit of his palace when he uttered that exulting apostrophe: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?"

P. 72. *The most stately tulips of the East.* The tulip is a flower of Eastern growth, and there held in great estimation; thus in an ode of Mesihi: "The edge of the bower is filled with the light of Ahmed; among the plants the fortunate tulips represent his companions."

P. 73. *Eunuchs in the rear.* As the black eunuchs were the inseparable attendants of the ladies, the rear was consequently their post; so in the argument to the poem of Amriolkais: "One day when her tribe had struck their tents, and were changing their station, the women as usual, came behind the rest, with the servants and baggage in carriages fixed on the backs of camels."

Certain cages of ladies. There are many passages of the Moallakat in which these cages are fully described; thus, in the poem of Lebeid: "How were thy tender affections raised when the damsels of the tribe departed, when they hid themselves in carriages of cotton, like antelopes in their lair, and the tents

as they were struck gave a piercing sound! They were concealed in vehicles whose sides were well covered with awnings and carpets, with fine-spun curtains and pictured veils." Again Zohair: "Look my friend! dost thou not discern a company of maidens seated on camels, and advancing over the high ground above the streams of Jortham? They leave on their right the mountains and rocky plains of Kenaan. Oh! how many of my bitter foes, and how many of my firm allies does Kenaan contain! They are mounted in carriages covered with costly awnings and with rose-coloured veils, the lining of which have the hue of crimson Andemwood. They now appear by the valley of Subaan, and now they pass through it; the trappings of all their camels are new and large. When they ascend from the bosom of the vale they sit forward on the saddle-cloths, with every mark of a voluptuous gaiety." Moallakat, by Sir W. Jones, pp. 46, 35; see also Lady M. W. Montague, let. xxvi.

Swagging somewhat awry. Amriolkais, in the first poem of the Moallakat, hath related a similar adventure: "On that happy day I entered the carriage, the carriage of Onaiza, who said, 'Woe to thee! thou wilt compel me to travel on foot.' She added, while the vehicle was bent aside with our weight, 'O Amriolkais descend, or my beast also will be killed!' I answered, 'Proceed, and loosen his rein, nor withhold from me the fruits of thy love, which again and again may be tasted with rapture. Many a fair one like thee, though not like thee a virgin, have I visited by night.'"

Dislodged. Our language wants a verb equivalent to the French *denicher*, to convey in this instance the precise sense of the author.

Those nocturnal insects which presage evil. It is observable that in the 5th verse of the 91st Psalm, the terror by night is rendered in the old English version the bugge by night.* In the first settled parts of North America, every nocturnal fly of a noxious quality is still generically named a bug, whence the term bugbear signifies one that carries terror wherever he goes. Beelzebub, or the Lord of flies, was an Eastern appellative given to the Devil, and the nocturnal sound called by the Arabians *azif* was believed to be the howling of demons. Analogous to this, is a passage in Comus, as it stood in the original copy:

> But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
> With all the grisly legions that troop
> Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
> Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous buggs
> 'Twixt Africa and Inde, I'll find him out.

* Instances are not wanted, both in the English and Greek versions, where the translators have modified the sense of the original by their own preconceived opinions. To this source may be ascribed the bugge of our Bible, and (δαιμονιον μεσημβρινον) the noon-day demon of the seventy, unless the copies of the latter be supposed to have read, not ישוד but וישד. If the terror by night be taken in connection with the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and both opposed to the arrow that flieth by day and the destruction that wasteth at noon, it will seem to imply the dread of real evil only, which may be explained in the language of the poet by

> Night, and all her sickly dews.

But if the rendering of our old version, adopting that of the Seventy, be founded, it will also include the imaginary evils that follow:

> Her spectres wan and birds of boding cry.

P. 74. *The locusts were heard from the thickets on the plain of Catoul.* The insects here mentioned are of the same species with the Τεττιξ of the Greeks, and the *Cicada* of the Latins, and are called locusts from their having been so denominated by the first English settlers in America.

Halted on the banks of the Tigris. It is a practice in the East, and especially when large parties journey together, to halt if possible in the vicinity of a stream; thus Zohair: "They rose at day-break; they proceeded at early dawn; they are advancing towards the valley of Ras directly and surely as the hand to the mouth. Now when they have reached the brink of yon blue gushing rivulet, they fix the poles of their tents, like the Arab, in a settled mansion."

The heavens looked angry, &c. This tempest may be deemed somewhat the more violent from a supposition that Mahomet interfered; which will appear the more probable, if the circumstance of its obliterating the road* be considered. William of Tyre hath recorded one of a similar kind that visited Baldwin in his expedition against Damascus: "He, against whose will all projects are vain, suddenly overspread the sky with darkness, poured down such torrents of rain, and so entirely effaced the roads, that scarce any hope of escaping remained. These disasters were indeed portended by a gloominess in the air, lowering clouds, irregular gusts of wind, increasing

* Exclusive however of preternatural interference, it frequently happens that a sudden blast will arise on the vast deserts of the East, and sweep away in its eddies the tracks of the last passenger, whose camel therefore in vain for the wanderer that follows,

"*Linquit* humi pedibus vestigia pressa bisulcis."

thunders, and incessant lightnings, but as the mind of man knows not what may befall him, these admonitions of Heaven were slighted and opposed."—*Gesta Dei per Francos*, p. 849.

He determined to cross over the craggy heights, &c., to Rocnabad. Oriental travellers have sometimes recourse to these expedients for the sake of abridging the toils of their journeys; hence Amgrad, in the Arabian Nights, who had himself been about six weeks in travelling from the isle of Ebene, could not comprehend the possibility of coming in less time, unless by enchantment, or crossing the mountains, which from the difficulty of the pass were but seldom traversed.

P. 76. *Tigers and vultures.* The ravages of these animals in the East are almost incredible.

> Before them, Death with shrieks directs their way,
> Fills the wild yell and leads them to their prey.

From the earliest days they have been the constant attendants on scenes of carnage. In the sacred writings, David threatens "to give the hosts of the Philistines to the fowls of the air, and the wild beasts of the earth." Antara boasts at the close of a conflict of "having left the father of his foes, like a victim, to be mangled by the lions of the wood, and the eagles* advanced in years." And in the narrative of

* Finely as Gray conceived the idea of the eagle awe-struck at the corses of the bards, there is a languor in his expression that wants to be removed. Milton, as his best editor judiciously remarks, applied (he might have said confined) the verb hurry to preternatural motion or imaginary beings; adopting it therefore in a kindred sense, might we not (for passes) advantageously read

"The famish'd eagle screams, and *hurries* by."

the prisoners taken at Bendore, the author relates that many of them were devoured by tigers and vultures.

P. 77. *Vathek—with two little pages.* "All the pages of the seraglio are sons of Christians made slaves in time of war in their most tender age. The incursions of robbers in the confines of Circassia afford the means of supplying the seraglio, even in times of peace." Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 157. That the pages here mentioned were Circassians, appears from the description of their complexion: more fair than the enamel of Franguestan.

Confectioners and cooks. What their precise number might have been in Vathek's establishment it is not now easy to determine, but in the household of the present grand Seignior there are not fewer than a hundred and ninety. Habesci's State, p. 145.

Torches were lighted, &c. Mr. Marsden relates, in his History of Sumatra, that tigers prove most fatal and destructive enemies to the inhabitants, particularly in their journeys; and adds that the numbers annually slain by those rapacious tyrants of the woods is almost incredible; as these tremendous enemies are alarmed at the appearance of fire, it is usual for the natives to carry a splendid kind of torch, chiefly to frighten them, and also to make a blaze with wood in different parts round their villages. P. 149.

P. 79. *One of the forests which bordered their way took fire.* Accidents of this kind in Persia are not unfrequent. "It was an ancient practice with the kings and great men to set fire to large bunches of dry combustibles, fastened round wild beasts and birds, which being then let loose the air and earth

appeared one great illumination; and as those terrified creatures naturally fled to the woods for shelter, it is easy to conceive that conflagrations which would often happen must have been peculiarly destructive." Richardson's Dissertation, p. 185. In the 83rd Psalm, v. 14, there is a reference to one of those fires, though arising from another cause; and Homer likewise has taken a simile from thence:

> Ηυτε πυρ Αιδηλον επιφλεγει ασπετον ὑλην
> Ουρεος εν κορυφης· ἑκαθεν δε τε φαινεται αυγη.
> Il. B. 455.

Hath seen some part of our bodies and, what is worse, our very faces. "I was informed," writes Dr. Cooke, "that the Persian women in general would sooner expose to public view any part of their bodies than their faces." Voyages and Travels, vol. ii. p. 443.

P. 81. *Cakes baked in silver ovens for his royal mouth.* Portable ovens were a part of the furniture of eastern travellers; St. Jerom (on Lament. v. 10) hath particularly described them. The Caliph's were of the same kind, only substituting silver for brass. Dr. Pococke mentions his having been entertained in an Arabian camp with cakes baked for him. In what the peculiarity of the royal bread consisted it is not easy to determine, but in one of the Arabian tales a woman, to gratify her utmost desire, wishes to become the wife of the Sultan's baker, assigning for the reason that she might have her fill of that bread which is called the Sultan's. Vol. iv. p. 269.

Vases of snow, and grapes from the banks of the Tigris. It was customary in Eastern climates, and especially in the sultry season, to carry when jour-

neying supplies of snow. These *æstivæ nives* (as Mamertinus styles them) being put into separate vases, were by that means better kept from the air, as no more was opened at once than might suffice for immediate use; to preserve the whole from solution, the vessels that contained it were secured in packages of straw. Gesta Dei, p. 1098. Vathek's ancestor, the Caliph Mahadi, in the pilgrimage to Mecca, which he undertook from ostentation rather than devotion, loaded upon camels so prodigious a quantity as was not only sufficient for himself and his attendants amidst the burning sands of Arabia, but also to preserve in their natural freshness the various fruits he took with him, and to ice all their drink whilst he staid at Mecca, the greater part of whose inhabitants had never seen snow till then. Anecdotes Arabes, p. 326.

Roasted wolf, &c. In the poem of Amriolkais a repast is described, which in manner of preparation resembles the present: "He soon brings us up to the foremost of the beasts, and leaves the rest far behind, nor has the herd time to disperse itself. He runs from wild bulls to wild heifers, and overpowers them in a single heat, without being bathed or even moistened with sweat. Then the busy cook dresses the game, roasting part, baking part on hot stones, and quickly boiling the rest in a vessel of iron." Disgusting as this refection of Vathek may be thought, Atlante boasts to Ruggiero of having fed him from his infancy on a similar diet:

> Di midolle già d' orsi e di leoni
> Ti porsi io dunque li primi alimenti?

and we read that lion's flesh was prescribed to Vathek, but on a different occasion. Anecdot. Arab.

p. 419. The vegetables that made part of this entertainment were such as the Koran hath ordained to be food for the damned.

Dropped their fans on the ground. Attendants for the same purpose are mentioned in the story of the king of the Black Isles: "One day when she was at bath I found myself sleepy after dinner, and lay down upon a sofa; two of her ladies who were then in my chamber came and sat down, one at my head and the other at my feet, with fans in their hands to moderate the heat, and to hinder the flies from disturbing my slumber." The comfort of such an attendant in the hour of repose can be known only in the climes of intolerable day.

P. 83. *Horrible Kaf.* This mountain, which in reality is no other than Caucasus, was supposed to surround the earth like a ring encompassing a finger; the sun was believed to rise from one of its eminences (as over Oeta, by the Latin poets) and to set on the opposite, whence from Kaf to Kaf signified from one extremity of the earth to the other. The fabulous historians of the east affirm that this mountain was founded upon a stone called *Sakhrat*, one grain of which, according to Lokman, would enable the possessor to work wonders; this stone is further described as the pivot of the earth, and said to be one vast emerald, from the refraction of whose beams the heavens derive their azure. It is added, that whenever God would excite an earthquake, he commands the stone to move one of its fibres (which supply in it the office of nerves) and, that being moved, the part of the earth connected with it quakes, is convulsed, and sometimes expands; such is the philosophy of the Koran! The Tarikh Tabari, written in Persian, analogous to the same tradition,

relates that, were it not for this emerald the earth would be liable to perpetual commotions, and unfit for the abode of mankind. To arrive at the Kaf a vast region, far from the sun and summer gale, must be traversed; over this dark and cheerless desert the way is inextricable without the direction of supernatural guidance. Here the dives or giants were confined after their defeat by the first heroes of the human race, and here also the peries, or fairies, are supposed in ordinary to reside. Sukrage the giant was king of Kaf, and had Rucail, one of the children of Adam for his prime minister. The giant Argenk, likewise, from the time that Tahamurath made war upon him, reigned here, and reared a superb palace in the city of Aherman, with galleries on whose walls were painted the creatures that inhabited the world prior to the formation of Adam. Herbelot, p. 230, &c.

The Simurgh. This is that wonderful bird of the east concerning which so many marvels are told; it was not only endowed with reason, but possessed also the knowledge of every language; hence, it may be concluded to have been a dive in a borrowed form. This creature relates of itself that it had seen the great revolution of seven thousand years twelve times commence and close; and that in its duration, the world had been seven times void of inhabitants, and as often replenished. The Simurgh is represented as a great friend to the race of Adam, and not less inimical to the dives. Tahamurath and Aherman were apprised by its predictions of all that was destined to befal them, and from it they obtained the promise of assistance in every undertaking. Armed with the buckler of Gian Ben Gian, Tahamurath was borne by it through the air over

the dark desert to Kaf. From its bosom his helmet was crested with plumes, which the most renowned warriors have ever since worn. In every conflict the Simurgh was invulnerable, and the heroes it favoured never failed of success; though possessed of power sufficient to exterminate its foes, yet the exertion of that power was supposed to be forbidden. Sadi, a serious author, gives it as an instance of the universality of Providence, that the Simurgh, notwithstanding its immense bulk, is at no loss for sustenance on the mountain of Kaf. Inatulla hath described Getiafrose, queen of the genii, as seated on a golden chariot, drawn by ten Simurghs, whose wings extended wide as the earth-shading bir,* and

* Or Banian, to which the epithet of Inatulla most emphatically belongs. Milton hath accurately described this extraordinary tree, though by another name:

> The fig-tree—not that kind for fruit renown'd:
> But, such as this day to Indians known,
> In Malabar or Decan, spreads her arms
> Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
> The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
> About the mother tree: a pillar'd shade
> High over-arch'd and echoing walks between.

Was it not from hence that Warburton framed his hypothesis on the origin of Gothic architecture? At least, here were materials sufficient for a fancy less forgetive than his. Mr. Ives, in his journey from Persia, thus speaks of this vegetable wonder: "This is the Indian's sacred tree. It grows to a prodigious height, and its branches spread a great way; the limbs drop down fibres, which take root and become another tree, united by its branches to the first, and so continue to do, until the trees cover a great extent of ground: the arches which those different stocks make are gothic, like those we see in Westminster Abbey; the stocks not being single but appearing as if composed of many stocks, are of a great circumference. There is a certain solemnity accompanying

whose talons resembled the proboscis of mighty elephants; but it does not appear from any other writer

those trees, nor do I remember that I was ever under the cover of any of them, but that my mind was at the time impressed with a reverential awe!" Page 460. From the

> Pillar'd shade high over-arch'd, and echoing walks between

as well as the

> Highest woods, impenetrable to star or sun-light

just before mentioned, and the name given to the tree, it is probable that the poet's description was principally founded on the account of Duret, who in the chapter Du Figuier d' Inde of his singular book (entitled, "Histoire admirable des plantes et herbes esmerueillables et miraculeuses en nature," et à Paris, 1605), thus writes; "Sa grosseur est quelquefois telle, que trois hommes ne le sçauroient embrasser; quelquefois vn ou deux de ces figuiers font un bois avez grand, toffu, et ombraguex, dans lequel les rayons du soleil ne peuuent aucunement penetrer, durant les chaleurs d'esté et font ces figuiers infinies tonnes et cabinets si concaues et couuerts de feuilles et de sinuositez [aisles and recesses, so arched over with foliage and embowed ramifications] qu'il s'y forme des echos ou reuerberations de voix et sons, jusques à trois fois; et est telle la moindre d'vn seul ombre de ses arbres, qu'elle peut contenir soubs soy à couuert huict cens ou mil personnes, et la plus grande ombre, trois mil hommes," p. 124. This tree might well be styled the earth-shading.*

Though the early architecture of our island be confessedly of a doubtful origin, it nevertheless deserves to be noted that

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* "The following is an account of the dimensions of a remarkable Banyan tree near Manjee, twenty miles west of Patna in Bengal. Diameter, 363 to 375 feet; circumference of its shadow at noon, 1116 feet; circumference of the several stems (in number 50 or 60), 921 feet."—*Marsden's History of Sumatra*, p. 131.

that there ever was more than one, which is frequently called the marvellous gryphon, and said to be like that imaginary monster. Herbelot, p. 1017, 810, &c.; Tales of Inatulla, vol. ii. pp. 71, 72. As the magic shield of Atlante resembles the buckler of Gian Ben Gian, so his Ippogrif apparently came from the Simurgh, notwithstanding the reference of Ariosto to the veridical archbishop:

> Non ho veduto mai, nè letto altrove,
> Fuor che in Turpin, d'un si fatto animale.

Palampores, &c. These elegant productions, which abound in all parts of the East, were of very remote antiquity; not only are σινδονας ενανθεις, finely flowered linens, noticed by Strabo, but Herodotus relates that the nations of Caucasus adorned their garments with figures of various creatures by means of the sap of certain vegetables, which, when macerated and diluted with water, communicate colours that cannot be washed out, and are no less permanent than the texture itself. Strabo, l. xv. p. 709; Herodot. l. i. p. 96. The Arabian Tales repeatedly describe these "fine linens of India, painted in the most lively colours, and representing beasts, trees, flowers, &c." Arab. Nights, vol. iv. p. 217, &c.

Afrits. These were a kind of Medusa, or Lamia, supposed to be the most terrible and cruel of all the orders of the dives. Herbelot, p. 66.

Tablets fraught with preternatural qualities. Mr. Richardson observes, "that in the east men of rank

the resemblance between the columns of the ruined chancel at Orford and those of Tauk Kesserah on the banks of the Tigris is much too strict to be merely casual; it may be added that the arches of this edifice, and their ornaments, are of the style we call the early Norman.

in general carried with them pocket astronomical tables, which they consulted on every affair of moment." These tablets however were of the magical kind, and such as often occur in works of romance. Thus in Boiardo, Orlando receives from the father of the youth he had rescued a book that would solve all doubts; and in Ariosto, Logistilla bestows upon Astolpho a similar directory. The books which Carathis turned over with Morakanabad were imagined to have possessed the like virtues.

Dwarfs. Such unfortunate beings as are thus "curtailed of fair proportion," have been for ages an appendage of eastern grandeur. One part of their office consists in the instruction of the pages, but their principal duty is the amusement of their master. If a dwarf happen to be a mute he is much esteemed, but if he be also a eunuch he is regarded as a prodigy, and no pains or expense is spared to obtain him. Habesci's State of the Ottoman Empire, p. 164, &c.

P. 84. *A cabin of rushes and canes.* Huts of this sort are mentioned by Ludeke, in his Expositio brevis Loc. Script. p. 51. Tuguriola seu palis, fruticibus viridibus, vel juncis circumdatis et tectis, amboque quidem facillimè construuntur.

A small spring supplies us with Abdest, and we daily repeat prayers, &c. Amongst the indispensable rules of the Mahometan faith, ablution is one of the chief; this rite is divided into three kinds; the first, performed before prayers, is called abdest; it begins with washing both hands, and repeating these words: "Praised be Alla, who created clean water, and gave it the virtue to purify; he also hath rendered our faith conspicuous." This done, water is taken in the right hand thrice, and the mouth being

washed the worshipper subjoins: "I pray thee, O Lord, to let me taste of that water which thou hast given to thy Prophet Mahomet in Paradise, more fragrant than musk, whiter than milk, sweeter than honey, and which has the power to quench for ever the thirst of him that drinks it." This petition is accompanied with sniffing a little water into the nose; the face is then three times washed, and behind the ears; after which water is taken with both hands, beginning with the right, and thrown to the elbow; the washing of the crown next follows, and the apertures of the ear with the thumbs; afterward the neck with all the fingers; and finally the feet; in this last operation it is held sufficient to wet the sandal only. At each ceremonial a suitable petition is offered, and the whole concludes with this: "Hold me up firmly, O Lord! and suffer not my foot to slip, that I may not fall from the bridge into hell." Nothing can be more exemplary than the attention with which these rites are performed; if an involuntary cough or sneeze interrupt them, the whole service is begun anew, and that as often as it happens. Habesci, p. 91, &c.

Reading the holy Koran. The Mahometans have a book of stops or pauses in reading the Koran, which divides it into seventeen sections, and allows of no more. Herbelot, p. 915.

The bells of a cafila. A cafila, or caravan, according to Pitts, is divided into distinct companies, at the head of which an officer, or person of distinction, is carried in a kind of horse litter, and followed by a sumpter camel loaded with his treasure; this camel hath a bell fastened to either side, the sound of which may be heard at a considerable distance; others have bells on their necks and their legs, to

solace them when drooping with heat and fatigue. Inatulla, also, in his tales hath a similar reference: "the bells of the cafila may be rung in the thirsty desert." Vol. ii. p. 15.

Deggial. This word signifies properly a liar and impostor, but is applied by Mahometan writers to their antichrist. He is described as having but one eye and eyebrow, and on his forehead the radicals of cafer (or infidel) are said to be impressed. According to the traditions of the faithful, his first appearance will be between Irak and Syria, mounted on an ass; seventy thousand Jews from Ispahan are expected to follow him; his continuance on earth is to be forty days; all places are to be destroyed by him and his emissaries, except Mecca or Medina, which will be protected by angels from the general overthrow; at last, however, he will be slain by Jesus, who is to encounter him at the gate of Lud. Herbelot, p. 282; Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 106.

Dictated by the blessed Intelligence. That is, the angel Gabriel. The Mahometans deny that the Koran was composed by their prophet; it being their general and orthodox belief that it is of divine original, nay even eternal and uncreated, remaining in the very essence of God; that the first transcript has been from everlasting by his throne, written on a table of immense size called the preserved table, on which are also recorded the divine decrees, past and future; that a copy was by the ministry of the angel Gabriel sent down to the lowest heaven, in the month of Ramadan, on the night or power; from whence Gabriel revealed it to Mahomet by parcels, some at Mecca, and some at Medina. Al Koran, ch. ii. &c.; Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 85.

P. 86. *Hath culled with his own hands these*

melons, &c. The great men of the East have ever been, what Herodotus shrewdly styled them, Δωροφαγοι, or gift-eaters; for no visitor can approach them with empty hands. In such a climate and situation, what present could be more acceptable to Vathek than this refreshing collation?

To kiss the fringe of thy consecrated robe. This observance was an act of the most profound reverence. Arabian Nights, vol. iv. p. 236, &c.

Fakreddin's spring residence. It has long been customary for the Arabs to change their habitations with the seasons. Thus Antara: "Thou hast possessed thyself of my heart; thou hast fixed thy abode, and art settled there, as a beloved and cherished inhabitant. Yet how can I visit my fair one whilst her family have their vernal mansion in Oneizatain, and mine are stationed in Ghailem?" Xenophon relates, in his Anabasis, that it was customary for the kings of Persia, θεριζειν και εριζειν, to pass the summer and spring in Susa and Ecbatana; and Plutarch observes further that their winters were spent in Babylon, their summers in Media (that is Ecbatana), and the pleasantest part of spring in Susa: Καιτοι τοσουτε Περσων βασιλεας εμακαριζον εν Βαβυλωνι τον χειμωνα διαγοντας· εν δε Μηδια το θερος· εν δε Σουσοις, το ηδιστον τοῦ εαρος. De Exil. p. 604. This το ηδιστον of the vernal season is exquisitely described by Solomon: "Lo the winter is past, the rain is over; it is gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the season of singing is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

An emerald set in lead. As nothing at the open-

ing of spring can exceed the luxuriant vegetation of these irriguous valleys, so no term could be chosen more expressive of their verdure. The prophet Ezekiel, emblematizing Tyre under the symbol of paradise, hath described by the different gems of the east the flowers that variegate its surface, and particularly by the emerald its green: "Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God: כל־אבן יקרה מסכתך thy carpet was an assemblage of every precious stone, the ruby, topaz, and the diamond, the chrysolite, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald." * Ch. xxviii. 13. It hath not perhaps been hitherto observed, that the paradise of Ariosto was copied from hence:

Zaffir, rubini, oro, topazj, e perle,
E diamanti, e chrysoliti, e giacinti
Potriano i fiori assimigliar, che per le
Liete piagge v'avea l'aura dipinti.
Si verdi l'erbe, che potendo averle
Qua giù, ne foran gli smeraldi vinti.
Canto xxxiv. st. 49.

When Gray in his description of Grasmere, spoke of its "meadows green as an emerald," he might have added also the circumstance noted by our author—beset with mountains of the hue of lead.

* The same kind of imagery abounds in the Oriental poets. Thus Abu Nawas: "Behold the gardens of the earth, and consider the emblems of those things which Divine power hath formed; eyes of silver (daisies) everywhere disclosed, with pupils like molten gold, united to an emerald stalk: these avouch that no one is equal to God." So likewise Sadi: "He hath planted rubies and emeralds on the hard rock; the ruby rose on its emerald stem." And Ebn Rumi, of the violet: "*It is not* a flower, but an emerald bearing a purple gem."

Shakespeare, in a similar comparison, hath denominated our green England,

This precious stone set in the silver sea.

Sugar. Dr. Pococke mentions the sugar-cane as a great dessert in Egypt; and adds that, besides coarse loaf sugar and sugar candy, it yields a third sort remarkably fine, which is sent to the Grand Seignior, and prepared only for himself. Travels, vol. i. pp. 183, 204.—The jeweller's son, in the story of the Third Calender, desires the prince to fetch some melon and sugar, that he might refresh himself with them. Arab. Nights, vol. i. p. 159.

Red Characters. The laws of Draco are recorded by Plutarch, in his life of Solon, to have been written in blood. If more were meant by this expression than that those laws were of a sanguinary nature, they will furnish the earliest instance of the use of red characters, which were afterwards considered as appropriate to supreme authority, and employed to denounce some requisition or threatening designed to strike terror. According to Suidas, this manner of writing was likewise practised in magic rites; hence their application in the instance here mentioned. Trotz in Herm. Hugonem, pp. 106, 307; Suidas sub voc. Θετσαλη γυνη.

Thy body shall be spit upon. There was no mark of contempt amongst the Easterns so ignominious as this. Arab. Nights, vol. i. p. 115; vol. iv. p. 275. It was the same in the days of Job. Herodotus relates of the Medes Πτυειν αυτιον Αισχρον εστ' and Xenophon relates Αισχρον εστι Περσαις το Απτυειν. Hence the reason is evident for spitting on our Saviour.

Bats shall engender in thy belly. Bats in these

countries were very abundant, and both from their numbers and nature held in abhorrence. See what is related of them by Thevenot, part i. pp. 132, 133. Egmont and Hayman, vol. ii. p. 87, and other travellers in the east.

P. 88. *The Bismillah.* This word (which is prefixed to every chapter of the Koran except the ninth) signifies In the name of the most merciful God. It became not the initiatory formula of prayer till the time of Moez the Fatimite. Herbelot, p. 326. *Ablution* is of an origin long prior to Mahomet; it is mentioned in Homer, and alluded to by the Psalmist: "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine altar, O Lord." Again: "Verily have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency."

P. 89. *A vast wood of palm-trees.* Perhaps the palm is no where more abundant than in this region, that only excepted to which Virgil refers, in a passage as yet not explained:

Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

If the ingenuousness and delicacy of a Right Reverend Critic (who is said to have owed his present dignity to a note on the context) had not been long known,* an ordinary reader might be startled at the resemblance between his Lordship's critique and Catrou's, whilst a fastidious one in a splenetic mood might apply, like another Edwards, the Marks of Imitation as so many canons to annoy their founder. The hypothesis however of Hartley, Priestley, and those other physiologists, who have so clearly de-

* See the tract intituled "On the Delicacy of Friendship, a seventh dissertation, addressed to the author of the sixth."

duced the phenomena of mind from organization, and traced back the coincidences of thought to predisposing motives and similar associations, will enable us on the idea of an internal conformity between the critics, to account for their congruity of writing, without leaving room to surmise that the one ever heard of the other. Not a breath then of Achan and his wedge of gold! Catrou, supposing that Virgil meditated the improvement of his writings after an excursion to Greece and Asia, translates ego in patriam rediens, by à mon retour en Italie; but the restricted sense in which the poet delights to apply patria (as in his first Eclogue:

> Nos patriæ fines, et dulcia linquimus arva,
> Nos patriam fugimus—)

as well as the mention of Mantua and the Mincius, precludes this more extended construction; if therefore ego in patriam rediens be literally taken, it will rather mark the design of Virgil to retire from Rome to the sequestered scenes of his native Mantua, where he was first smitten with the love of song, and whither he purposes to bring the sisterhood of the Muses; but the clause least understood is that which immediately follows:

> Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

Catrou hath inferred from it that Virgil actually projected a voyage to the Levant; to fetch palms no doubt! The bishop, however, after remarking that the poet having held himself forth as a conqueror, and declared the object of his conquest to have been bringing the Muses captive from Greece, subjoins, "the palmy triumphal entry, which was

usual to victors on their return from foreign successes, follows:

Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas."

But with the deference due to so venerable a critic, will this explication suffice? for may it not be asked, If to celebrate a triumph for foreign successes palms from Idumæa were requisite? If victors were accustomed to go thither for them previous to their triumphal entry? Or (allowing Idumæas to be, sine mente sonum, a word without meaning*) how could it happen that the palmy triumphal entry should have been usual to victors, and yet Virgil the first whose success was to be graced with it?

Primus Idumæus referam—palmas.

It is observable that this book of the Georgics opens with proposing its subject, the novelty of which induces the author to remark that, as the usual themes of the Roman poets were all become trite, it would be his aim to seek fame from foreign acquisitions, and his purpose to aggrandize the glory of his country by subjecting to its language the poetical beauties of Greece and Judea.

If it be admitted that, under the allegory of leading the Muses (who were peculiar to Greece) from the summit of the Aonian mount, the poet intended

* Thus also Martyn, because Idumæa was famous for palms, interprets Idumæas palmas, "palms in general;" and Heyne: "Idumæas autem palmas poetico plane epitheto appellabat, a nobili aliquo genere;" yet he immediately adds: "Idumen poetæ pro Idumæa ac tota Judæa dicunt, quam quidem palmis frequentem fuisse notum est:—arbusto palmarum dives Idume. Lucan. iii. 216."

to characterize the loftiest flights of Grecian poetry, or the epic,* it follows from parity of reason that, under the symbol of their country,† he equally designed the prophetic strains of the Hebrews:

> Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit,
> Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas:
> Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

The verb *referam* in connection with *tibi Mantua,* implies that Virgil had already brought Idumæan palms to his natal soil, and what these meant is abundantly plain; for whoever will compare the 4th Eclogue with the prophecy of Isaiah, must perceive too close an agreement to suppose that the same images, under similar combinations, and both new to a Roman poet, should have occurred to Virgil rather from chance than a previous perusal of the prophet‡ in Greek. It only remains then to be in-

* It was in this light that the Æneis was regarded by Propertius, who exclaims in reference to it (B. ii. El. xxxiv. v. 65)

> Cedite Graii,
> Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade!

The author of an elegant and masterly pamphlet, entitled, "Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Eneid" (published by Elmsly, 1770) supposes Propertius in the context to have had his eye on the shield of Æneas; but from comparing the passage itself with the Sixth Elegy of the Fourth Book, it appears more likely that he alluded to the battle of Actium, as described in Æn. viii. 704.

† It was by this emblem that the Romans on their coins represented Judæa; and particularly on the medal, to signalize its reduction:

> "Beneath her palm here sad Judea weeps."

‡ Tacitus mentions the Ancient Scriptures of the Jewish Priests, as containing the prediction which Virgil is here supposed to have adopted. Hist. l. v. § 13.

quired whether Virgil, after having introduced in his Pastorals some of the prophetic traits of Hebrew poetry, any further availed himself of it in the Epic here projected? For a satisfactory answer to this question it might suffice to reply, that if there be any characteristic which discriminates the Æneid more than another, it is the prophetic:

> In medio mihi Cæsar erit, templumque tenebit.

As in the Pollio, the images employed by the prophet to prefigure the birth of the Messiah and the blessings of his reign, were applied by the Roman poet to the birth of the expected son of Augustus* and the return of the golden age under his auspices; so in the Æneid, he resumes the prediction, and applies it to Augustus himself:

> Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis,
> Augustus Cæsar, Divi genus; aurea condet
> Sæcula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva
> Saturno quondam; super et Garamantas et Indos
> Proferet Imperium. Jacet extra sidera tellus,
> Extra anni solisque vias, &c.
>
> *Æn.* VI. 792.

Inscription. Inscriptions of this sort are still retained; thus Ludeke, "Interni non solum Divani pluriumque conclavium parietes, sed etiam frontispicia super portas inscriptiones habent."—Expositio, p. 54. In the history of Amine we find an inscription over a gate in letters of gold, analogous to this of Fakreddin: "Here is the abode of everlasting pleasures and content." Arab. Nights, vol. i. p. 193.

* By Scribonia, then pregnant of the infamous Julia. See Bishop Chandler's Vindication, and Masson's Dissertation subjoined.

A magnificent taktrevan. This kind of moving throne, though more common at present than in the days of Vathek, is still confined to persons of the highest rank.

P. 90. *Her light brown hair floated in the hazy breeze of the twilight.* Literally hyacinthine; the metaphor taken from this flower expressed by the word sunbul, is familiar to the Arabians. Thus in Sir William Jones's Solima, an eclogue made up of eastern images:

> The fragrant hyacinths of Azza's hair,
> That wanton with the laughing summer air—

Nor was it less common to the Greeks; perhaps Milton in the following lines,

> Hyacinthin locks
> Round from his parted forelock manly hung
> Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad—

adopted it from Lucian. The term manly, with the restriction at the close, gives full scope for this conjecture, as in Lucian the descriptions relate only to women. The poet may be further traced upon the snow of the classics in the use of the term clustering, an equivalent expression being appropriated by the ancients to that disposition of the curls which resembles the growth of grapes, and may be observed on gems, coins, and statues. Plutarch, Consol. Apoll. p. 196. It is singular that both lexicographers and critics should have considered Βοτρυοχαιτης and Βοτρυοκοσμος as synonymous; this confusion however appears to have arisen from both being attributes of Bacchus, whose hair was not only adorned with clusters from the vine, but like the locks of Apollo (πλοκμοι βοτρυοεντες. Apollon. Αργον. b. 677) was it-

self clustering.* Sir William Jones acutely conjectures that Solomon alluded to the hair in that elliptical speech of the Shulamite, Song i. 14.

אשכל הכפר דודי לי
בכרמי עין גדי

A cluster of grapes, &c.

The like epithet, though adopted from a different fruit, occurs in the poem of Amriolkais: "Her long coal-black hair decorated her back, thick and diffused, like bunches of dates clustering on the palm-tree." The diffusion of hair here noticed, and its floating as described by our author, are circumstances so frequent in the works of Hafez and Jami, that there is scarce a page of them in which the idea of the breeze playing with the tresses of a beautiful girl is not agreeably and variously expressed.† An instance from Petrarch resembling their manner may be seen in the lines that follow:

Aura, che quelle chiome bionde e crespe
Circondi, e movi, e se' mossa da loro
Soavemente, e spargi quel dolce oro,
E poi'l raccogli, e'n bei nodi'l rincrespe.
Son. cxci.

P. 90. *Your ivory limbs.* The Arabians compare the skin of a beautiful woman to the egg of the

* Winckelmann hath strangely fixed upon the reverse of this character as an exclusive property of these divinities; and so infallible a criterion does he make it, as even from it alone to ascertain their mutilated statues. Hist. de l'Art d' Antiq. tom. ii. p. 146. However, in another part of his work he refers to Plutarch as cited above.

† Preface to Jones's Poems, p. xii.

ostrich when preserved unsullied;* thus Amriolkais: "Delicate was her shape, fair her skin, and her body well proportioned; her bosom was as smooth as a mirror, or like the pure egg of an ostrich, of a yellowish tint blended with white." Also the Koran: "Near them shall lie the virgins of Paradise, refraining their looks from beholding any besides their spouses, having large black eyes, and resembling the eggs of an ostrich covered with feathers from dust." Moallakat, p. 8; Al Koran, ch. 27. But though the Arabian epithet be taken from thence, yet the word ivory is substituted, as more analogous to European ideas, and not foreign from the eastern; thus Amru: "And two sweet breasts, smooth and white as vessels of ivory, modestly defended from the hand of those who presume to touch them." Moallakat, p. 77.

Baths of rose-water. The use of perfumed waters for the purpose of bathing is of an early origin in the east, where every odoriferous plant sheds a richer fragrance than is known to our more humid climates. The rose which yields this lotion is, according to Hasselquist, of a beautiful pale blush colour, double, large as a man's fist, and more exquisite in scent than any other species. The quantities of this water

*A fair skin is likened by the Italian Poets to curd: thus Bracciolini:

I suoi teneri membri un latte sieno
Che tremolante, ma non rotto ancora,
Pose accorto Pastor su i verdi giunchi.
Amoroso Sdegno, iii. 2.

Likewise Tasso:

egli rivolse
I cupidi occhi in quelle membra belle,
Che, come suole tremolare, il latte
Ne giunchi, si parean morbide, e bianche.
Aminta, iii. 1.

distilled annually at Fajhum, and carried to distant countries, is immense. The mode of conveying it is in vessels of copper, coated with wax. Voyag. p. 248. Ben Jonson makes Volpone say to Celia:

> Their bath shall be the juyce of gilliflowers,
> Spirit of roses and of violets.

Amuse you with tales. Thus in the story of Alraoui: "There was an emir of Grand Cairo, whose company was no less coveted for his genius than his rank; being one day in a melancholy mood, he turned towards a courtier and said: 'Alraoui, my heart is dejected and I know not the cause; relate to me some pleasant story to dispel my chagrin.' Alraoui replied: 'the great have with reason regarded tales as the best antidote to care; if you will allow me, I will tell you my own.'" Translated from one of the unpublished MSS. mentioned in the preface. "The Arabian Nights," saith Colonel Capper in his observations on the passage to India, through Egypt, and across the Great Desert, "are by many people supposed to be a spurious production, and are therefore slighted in a manner they do not deserve; they are written by an Arabian, and are universally read and admired throughout Asia by persons of all ranks, both old and young; considered therefore as an original work, descriptive as they are of the manners and customs of the east in general, and also of the genius and character of the Arabians in particular, they surely must be thought to merit the attention of the curious; nor are they in my opinion entirely destitute of merit in other respects; for although the extravagance of some of the stories is carried too far, yet on the whole one cannot help admiring the fancy and inven-

tion of the author in striking out such a variety of pleasing incidents, pleasing I call them because they have frequently afforded me much amusement; nor do I envy any man his feelings who is above being pleased with them; but before any person decides on the merit of these books he should be eye-witness of the effects they produce on those who best understand them. I have more than once seen the Arabians on the desert sitting round a fire, listening to these stories with such attention and pleasure, as totally to forget the fatigue and hardship with which an instant before they were totally overcome; in short, they are held in the same estimation all over Asia, as the adventures of Don Quixote are in Spain." If the observation of the Knight of La Mancha, respecting translation in general be just—"me parece, que el traducir de una lengua en otra; es como quien mira los tapices flamencos por el reves, que aunque se ven las figuras, son llenas de hilos que las escurecen, y no se ven con la lisura y tez de la haz"—the wrong side of tapestry will represent more truly the figures on the right, notwithstanding the floss that blurs them, than any version, the precision and smoothness of the Arabian surface. The prospect of a rich country in all the glories of summer is not more different from its November appearance, than the original of those tales, when opposed to the French translation; of which it may be added, our version is at best but a moonlight view:

pallida la luna
Tingea d'un lume scolorito e incerto
La vasta solitudine terrena.

Lamb à la crême. No dish amongst the Easterns was more generally admired; the Caliph Abdolme-

lek, at a splendid entertainment to which whoever came was welcome, asked Amrou the son of Hareth what kind of meat he preferred to all others; the old man answered: "An ass's neck, well seasoned and roasted." "But what say you," replied the Caliph, "to the leg or shoulder of a lamb *à la crême?*" and added:

"How sweetly we live if a shadow would last!"

M. S. Laud. Numb. 161. A. Ockley's Hist. of the Saracens, vol. ii. p. 277.

Made the dwarfs dance against their will. Ali Chelebi al Moufti, in a treatise on the subject, held that dancing after the example of the Dervishes, who made it a part of their devotion, was allowable. But in this opinion he was deemed to be heterodox; for Mahometans in general place dancing amongst the things that are forbidden. Herbelot, p. 98.

Durst not refuse the Commander of the Faithful. The mandates of Oriental potentates have ever been accounted irresistible; hence the submission of these devotees to the will of the Caliph. Esther i. 19; Daniel vi. 8; Ludeke Expos. brevis, p. 60.

He spread himself on the sofa. The idiom of the original occurs in Euripides, and is from him adopted by Milton:

Ιδετε τον Γερυτ' α-
μαλον επι πεδω
χυμενον· ω ταλας.
Heraclidæ, v. 75.

See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
With languish'd head unpropt,
As one past hope, abandon'd,
And by himself given over.
Samson, v. 118.

P. 91. *Properly lubricated with the balm of Mecca.* Unguents, for reasons sufficiently obvious, have been of general use in hot climates. According to Pliny, "at the time of the Trojan war, they consisted of oils perfumed with the odours of flowers, and chiefly of roses;" whence the *'ροδοεν ελαιον* of Homer. Hasselquist speaks of oil impregnated with the tuberose and jessamine; but the unguent here mentioned was preferred to every other. Lady M. W. Montagu, desirous to try its effects, seems to have suffered materially from having improperly applied it.

If their eye-brows and tresses were in order. As perfuming and decorating the hair of the Sultanas was an essential duty of their attendants, the translator hath ventured to substitute the term tresses for another more exact to the original. In Don Quixote indeed a waiting woman of the duchess mentions the same services with our author, but as performed by persons of her own sex: "hay en Candaya mugeres que andan de casa en casa á quitar el vello, y á pulir las cejas, y hacer otros menjurges tocantes á mugeres, nosotras las dueñas de mi señora por jamas quisímos admitirlas, porque las mas oliscan á terceras," tom. iv. cap. 40, p. 42. Other offices of the dressing-room and toilet may be seen in Lucian, vol. ii. Amor. 39, p. 441. The Arabians had a preparation of antimony and galls with which they tinged the eye-brows a beautiful black, and great pains were taken to shape them into regular arches. In combing the hair it was customary to sprinkle it with perfumes, and to dispose it in a variety of becoming forms. Richardson's Dissertat. p. 481; Lady M. W. Montagu's Letters.

The nine hundred and ninety-ninth time. The

Mahometans boast of a doctor who is reported to have read over the Koran not fewer than twenty thousand times. Herbelot, p. 75.

Black eunuchs, sabre in hand. In this manner the apartments of the ladies were constantly guarded. Thus in the story of the enchanted horse, Firouz Schah, traversing a strange palace by night, entered a room, "and by the light of a lanthorn saw that the persons he had heard snoring were black eunuchs with naked sabres by them, which was enough to inform him that this was the guard chamber of some queen or princess." Arabian Nights, vol. iv. p. 189.

P. 93. *Nouronihar, daughter of the Emir, was sprightly as an antelope, and full of wanton gaiety.* Solomon has compared his bride to "a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots;" Horace, a sportive young female to an untamed filly; Sophocles, a delicate virgin to a wild heifer; Ariosto, Angelica to a fawn or kid; and Tasso, Erminia to a hind; but the object of resemblance adopted by our author is of superior beauty to them all.

To let down the great swing. The swing was an exercise much used in the apartments of the eastern ladies, and not only contributed to their health, but amusement. Tales of Inatulla, vol. i. p. 259.

I accept the invitation of thy honied lips. Uncommon as this idiom may appear in our language, it was not so either to the Hebrew or the Greek. Compare Proverbs xvi. 24—

ציפדבש אמרינעם

with Homer, Iliad A. 249—

Του και απο γλωσσης Μελιτος γλυκιων ῥεεν αυδη—

Theocritus, Idyl. xx. 26—

Εκ στοματων δε
Ερρεε μοι φωνα γλυκερωτερα η Μελικηρω—

And Solomon's Song, iv. 11—

נפת תטפנה שפתותיך כלה
דבש

with Moschus, Idyl. i. 9—

ἀδυ λαλημα·
ὰς μελι, φωνα.

An Arabian fabulist, enumerating the charms of a consummate beauty, hath used the identical expression of our author, but probably in an extended sense, as

From her lip
Not words alone pleased him.

My senses are dazzled with the radiance that beams from thy charms, or, to express an idiom for which we have no substitute, thy countenance, *rayonnante de beautes et de graces.* Descriptions of this kind are frequent in Arabian writers; thus Tarafa: "Her face appears to be wrapped in a veil of sunbeams." And in the Arabian Nights: "Schemselnihar came forward amongst her attendants with a majesty resembling the sun amidst the clouds, which receive his splendour without concealing his lustre." To account for this compliment in the mouth of Bababalouk, we should remember that he was, *ex officio, elegans formarum spectator.*

P. 95. *Melodious Philomel, I am thy rose.* The passion of the nightingale for the rose is celebrated

over all the east; thus Mesihi, as translated by Sir W. Jones:

> Come, charming maid, and hear thy poet sing,
> Thyself the rose, and he the bird of spring;
> Love bids him sing, and love will be obey'd,
> Be gay; too soon the flowers of spring will fade.

P. 96. *Oil spilt in breaking the lamps.* It appears from Thevenot that illuminations were usual on the arrival of a stranger, and he mentions on an occasion of this sort two hundred lamps being lighted, the quantity of oil therefore spilt by Bababalouk may be easily accounted for from this custom.

Reclining on down. See Lady M. W. Montagu, let. xxvi.

P. 98. *Calenders.* These were a sort of men amongst the Mahometans who abandoned father and mother, wife and children, relations and possessions, to wander through the world under a pretence of religion, entirely subsisting on the fortuitous bounty of those they had the address to dupe. Herbelot, Suppl. p. 204.

Santons. A body of religionists who were also called *Abdals,* and pretended to be inspired with the most enthusiastic raptures of divine love; they were regarded by the vulgar as saints. Olearius, tom. i. p. 971; Herbelot, p. 5.

Dervises. The term *dervise* signifies a poor man, and is the general appellation by which a religious amongst the Mahometans is named. There are however discriminations that distinguish this class from the others already mentioned; they are bound by no vow of poverty, they abstained not from marriage, and, whenever disposed they may relinquish both their blue shirt and profession. Herbelot, Suppl. 214.

It is observable that these different orders, though not established till the reign of Nasser al Samani, are notwithstanding mentioned by our author as coeval with Vathek, and by the author of the Arabian Nights as existing in the days of Haroun al Raschid; so that the Arabian fabulists appear as inattentive to chronological exactness in points of this sort as our immortal dramatist himself.

Brahmins. These constituted the principal caste of the Indians, according to whose doctrine *Brahma,* from whom they are called, is the first of the three created beings by whom the world was made. This Brahma is said to have communicated to the Indians four books, in which all the sciences and ceremonies of their religion are comprised. The word Brahma in the Indian language signifies pervading all things. The Brahmins lead a life of most rigid abstinence, refraining not only from the use but even the touch of animal food, and are equally exemplary for their contempt of pleasures, and devotion to philosophy and religion. Herbelot, p. 212; Bruckeri Hist. Philosoph. tom. i. p. 194.

Fakirs. This sect were a kind of religious anchorites, who spent their whole lives in the severest austerities and mortification. It is almost impossible for the imagination to form an extravagance that has not been practised by some of them to torment themselves; as their reputation for sanctity rises in proportion to their sufferings, those amongst them are reverenced the most who are most ingenious in the invention of tortures, and persevering in enduring them; hence some have persisted in sitting or standing for years together in one unvaried posture, supporting an almost intolerable burden, dragging the most cumbrous chains, exposing their naked

bodies to the scorching sun, and hanging with the head downward before the fiercest fires. Relig. Ceremon. vol. iii. p. 264, &c.; White's Sermons, p. 504.

Some that cherished vermin. In this attachment they were not singular; the Emperor Julian not only discovered the same partiality, but celebrated with visible complacency the shaggy and populous beard which he fondly cherished; and even the historian of the Roman empire affirms "that the little animal is a beast familiar to man, and signifies love." Vol. ii. p. 343.

P. 98. *Visnow and Ixhora.* Two deities of the East Indians, concerning whose history and adventures more nonsense is related than can be found in the whole compass of mythology besides; the traditions of their votaries are no doubt allegorical, but without a key to disclose their mystic import they are little better than senseless jargon.

Talapoins. This order, which abounds in Siam, Laos, Pegu, and other countries, consists of different classes and both sexes, but chiefly of men. Relig. Ceremon. vol. iv. p. 62, &c.

Objects of pity were sure to swarm round him. Ludeke mentions the practice of bringing those who were suffering under any calamity, or had lost the use of their limbs, &c., into public for the purpose of exciting compassion; on an occasion therefore of this sort when Fakreddin, like a pious Mussulman, was publicly to distribute his alms, and the Commander of the faithful to make his appearance, such an assemblage might well be expected. The eastern custom of regaling a convention of this kind is of great antiquity, as is evident from the parable of the king in the Gospels, who entertained the maimed,

the lame, and the blind; nor was it discontinued when Dr. Pococke visited the East. Vol. i. p. 182.

P. 100. *Horns of an exquisite polish.* Jacinto Polo de Medina, in one of his epigrams has as unexpected a turn on the same topic:

Cavando un sepulcro un hombre
Sacò largo, corvo y grueso,
Entre otros muchos, un hueso,
Que tiene cuerno por nombre:
Volviòlo al sepulcro al punto:
Y viéndolo un cortesa no.
Dijo: bien haceis, hermano,
Que es hueso de ese defunto.

Small plates of abominations. The Koran hath established several distinctions relative to different kinds of food; and many Mahometans are so scrupulous as not to touch the flesh of any animal over which in the article of death the butcher had omitted to pronounce the Bismillah. Relig. Cerem. vol. vii. p. 110.

Fish which they drew from a river. According to Le Bruyn, the Oriental method of fishing with a line is by winding it round the finger, and when the fisherman feels that the bait is taken he draws in the string with alternate hands; in this way, he adds, a good dish of fish is soon caught. Tom. i. p. 564. It appears from a circumstance related by Galand that Vathek was fond of this amusement. Herbelot, Suppl. p. 210.

Sinai. This mountain is deemed by Mahometans the noblest of all others, and even regarded with the highest veneration, because the divine law was promulgated from it. Herbelot, p. 812.

P. 101. *Peries.* The word *peri* in the Persian language signifies that beautiful race of creatures which

constitutes the link between angels and men. The Arabians call them *ginn*, or genii, and we (from the Persian, perhaps) fairies; at least the peries of the Persian romance correspond to that imaginary class of beings in our poetical system. The Italians denominate them *fata*, in allusion to their power of charming and enchanting; thus the *Manta fatidica* of Virgil is rendered in Orlando *La fata Manto*. The term ginn being common to both peries and dives, some have erroneously fancied that the peries were female dives; this appellation, however, served only to discriminate their common nature from the angelic and human, without respect to their qualities, moral or personal; thus the dives are hideous and wicked, whilst the peries are beautiful and good. Amongst the Persian poets the beauty of the peries is proverbial, insomuch that a woman superlatively handsome is styled by them the offspring of a peri.

Butterflies of Cashmere. The same insects are celebrated in an unpublished poem of Mesihi, another of the MSS. mentioned in the preface. Sir Anthony Shirlie relates that it was customary in Persia "to hawke after butterflies with sparrows made to that use, and stares." It is perhaps to this amusement that our author alludes in the context.

I had rather that his teeth should mischievously press my finger. These *molles morsiunculæ* remind one of Lesbia and her sparrow:

> Passer deliciæ meæ puellæ,
> Quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
> Quoi primum digitum dare adpetenti,
> Et acres solet incitare morsus.

In the story of the sleeper awakened (which the Introduction to the Taming of the Shrew greatly re-

sembles) Abou Hassan thus addrésses the lady that was brought him: "Come hither, fair one, and bite the end of my finger,* that I may feel whether I am asleep or awake." Arab. Nights, vol. iii. p. 137. Lady Percy, with all the fondness of insinuation, practises on her wayward Hotspur a blandishment similar to that here instanced by Nouronihar:

> Come, come, you paraquito, answer me
> Directly to this question that I ask.
> In faith I'll break thy little finger, Harry,
> An if thou wilt not tell me all things true.

P. 105. *Megnoun and Leileh.* These personages are esteemed amongst the Arabians as the most beautiful, chaste and impassioned of lovers; and their amours have been celebrated with all the charms of verse in every Oriental language; the Mahometans regard them and the poetical records of their love in the same light as the Bridegroom and Spouse, and the Song of Songs are regarded by the Jews. Herbelot, p. 573.

They still detained him in the harem. Noureddin, who was as old as Gulchenrouz, had a similar indulgence of resorting to the harem, and no less availed himself of it. Arab. Nights, vol. iii. pp. 9, 10.

Dart the lance in the chase. Throwing the lance was a favourite pastime with the young Arabians; and so expert were they in this practice (which prepared them for the conflicts both of the chase and of war) that they could bear off a ring on the points of their javelins. Richardson's Dissertat. pp. 198, 281. Though the ancients had various methods

* Αλλ' επι λεκτρον ιων, ακρον δακτυλον καταδακνω.
—*Homer. Batrach.* v. 45.

of hunting, yet the two which chiefly prevailed were those described by Virgil,* and alluded to by Solomon,† Prov. vii. 22.

Nor curb the steeds. Though Gulchenrouz was too young to excel in horsemanship, it nevertheless

* Dum trepidant alæ, saltusque indagine cingunt.
—*Æn.* iv. 121.

Notwithstanding the explanations of alæ which have been given by Servius, Burman and others, there can scarce be a doubt but that Virgil referred to the custom of scaring dees into holts, with feathers fastened on lines; a practice so effectual to the purpose, that Linnæus characterized the dama or fallow deer, from it, *arcetur filo horizontali.* The same stratagem is mentioned in the Georgics (iii. 371).

Puniceæve agitant pavidos formidine pinnæ:

and again in the Æneid (xii. 749)

Inclusum veluti si quando flumine nactus
Cervum, aut puniceæ septum formidine pinnæ.

It is observable however that the poet, in these instances, hath studiously varied his mode of expression; the sportsmen of Italy used pinion feathers, which, the better to answer their purpose, they dyed of a Lybian red; ‡ but as Africa abounded in birds whose wings were impregnated with the spontaneous and glossy tincture of nature, such an expedient in that country must have been needless. If we advert then to the scene of Dido's chase, the reason will be obvious why Virgil omitted puniceæ, and for pinnæ substituted alæ. There is a passage in Nemesianus which will at once confirm the interpretation here given, and illustrate the judgment of the poet in the choice of his terms:

Hinc [sc. ex Africa] mage puniceas nativo munere sumes:
Namque illic sine fine, greges florentibus alis
Invenies avium, suavique rubescere luto.
Cynegeticon, v. 317.

† The wide region of conjectural emendation cannot produce a happier instance of critical skill than was discovered

‡ Lybice fucantur sandyce pinnæ.—*Gratii Cyneg.* v. 86.

was an essential accomplishment amongst the Arabians; hence the boast of Amriolkais: "Often have I risen at early dawn, while the birds were yet in

by that accurate and judicious scholar, the late Dr. Hunt,* who, when the sense of the passage referred to had for ages been lost, sagaciously restored it by curtailing a letter. Proverbs vii. 22. As an hart (איל for אויל) bounded into the toils, till a dart strike through his liver. When the game driven together were even circumvented, as described by Virgil, or ensnared by the foot (ὠδοσραβῃ) as alluded to by Solomon, the hunters dispatched them with their missile weapons. Thus Xenophon (as cited in Dr. Hunt's Disserta-

* The correction with the context is this:

22. He goeth after her straightway,
As an ox goeth to the slaughter;
23. Or as an hart boundeth into the toils,
'Till a dart strike through his liver;
24. As a bird hasteth to the snare,
And knoweth not that it is for his life.

Dr. Jubb well imagined (though he hath ill rendered הטחו in the 21st verse, *Irretivit illum*) that the heedless haste of the bird towards the snare might be caused by the lure of a female's call, and adduced from Oppian an apposite example:

Ὡς δε τις οιωνοισι μορον δολοεντα φυτευων
Θηλειαν θαμνοισι κατακρυπτει λασιοισιν
Ορνιν, δμαγλωσσοιο συνεμπορον ηθαδα θηρης·
Ἡ δε λιγα κλαζει ξουθον μελος οἱ δ' αιοντες
Παντες επισκερχουσι, και ες βροκον αυτον ἱενται
Θηλυτερης ενοπησι ὠαραπλαγχθεντες ιωης.
Halieut. iv. 120.

As when the fowler to the fields resorts,
His caged domestic partner of his sports
Behind some shade-projecting bush he lays,
And wreaths the wiry cell with blooming sprays.
The pretty captive to the groves around
Warbles her practised care-deluding sound.
The attentive flocks pursue with ravish'd ear
The female music of the feather'd fair,
Forget to see, and rush upon the snare.
Jones.

their nest, and mounted a hunter with smooth short hair, of a full height, and so fleet as to make captive the beasts of the forest; ready in turning, quick in pursuing, bold in advancing, firm in backing, and performing the whole with the strength and swiftness of a vast rock which a torrent has pushed from its lofty base; a bright bay steed from whose polished back the trappings slide, as drops of rain slide hastily down the slippery marble. . . . . He makes the light youth slide from his seat, and violently shakes the skirts of a heavier and more stubborn rider." Moallakat, p. 10. The stud of Fakreddin consisted no doubt of as noble a breed, though sprung neither from "the mighty Tartar horse" (whose gigantic rider was slain by Codadad), nor the sire of Clavileno "and the wondrous horse of brass." Milton's allusion to the last having occasioned much fruitless inquiry concerning his pedigree,* it shall here be made out, with that of his brother.

tion) Χρη δ' εαν ουτως ελῃ—εαν μεν η αρρην μη ὡροσιναι εγγυς· τοις γαρ κερασι ὡαιει, και τοις ὡοσιν· αποθεν ουν ακοντιζειν. When the animal is thus caught, you must not, if it be a male, advance within his reach, for they are apt to strike with their horns and their heels; it will be proper therefore to pierce him at a distance.

* "Among the MSS. at Oriel College in Oxford is an old Latin treatise entitled 'Fabula de æneo caballo.' Here I imagined I had discovered the origin of Chaucer's 'Squier's Tale,' so replete with marvellous imagery, and evidently an Arabian fiction of the middle ages; but I was disappointed, for on examination, it appeared to have not even a distant connexion with Chaucer's story. I mention this that others, on seeing such a title in the catalogue, might not be flattered with specious expectations of so curious a discovery, and misled like myself by a fruitless inquiry."—WARTON'S edit. of *Milton's Poems*, p. 82.

The principal qualities of "the horse of brass," were — that he was brought before the Tartar King after the third course of a feast, which was solemnized at the commencement of spring; that he was able within the compass of a natural day to carry his rider wherever he might choose; that he could mount into the air as high as an eagle, and with as equable and easy a motion; that by turning one pin fixed in his ear his course might be directed to a destined spot, and by means of another he might be made to alight, or return to the place from whence he set out.

The particulars of Clavileño are—that he was the production of an enchanter; was capable of rising into the air with the velocity of an arrow, and carrying his rider to any distance; was put into motion by the turning of a pin on his neck, and directed in his course by another in his forehead; that he fleeted so steadily through the air as not to spill a drop from a cup full of water in the hand of his rider; that, being lent by his owner, Pierres made a long voyage upon him, and brought off the fair Magalona who alighted to become a queen; that Don Quixote, when high in the air, knew not the management of the pin to prevent his rising; and that he at last vanished amidst rockets and crackers.

The resemblances here specified are evidently too strong to have resulted from accident; and it will appear on further enquiry that "the enchanted horse," in the Arabian Nights, was not only pos-

sessed of those qualities which were common to them both, but also of such as were peculiar to each. Thus he was presented to the King of Persia at the close of a festival which was celebrated on the opening of spring; could transport his rider, and in the space of a day, wherever he listed; moved so smoothly as to cause no shock, even on his coming to the ground; could soar beyond the ken of every beholder; might be guided by turning a pin in the hollow of his neck to any point his rider should choose; and by means of another behind his right ear be made to descend, or return whence he came; was the production of an enchanter; passed through the air with the speed of an arrow; having been lent by his owner to Firouz Schah, carried him a considerable distance, and brought back behind him the princess of Bengal, to whom the prince was afterwards married; that Firouz Schah, when high in the air, was unable to manage the pin so as to prevent him from rising; and finally, that he made his last exit in an explosion of fireworks and smoke.*

The bow, however, he drew with a certain aim. This, as well as the other accomplishments mentioned before, was a constituent part of an eastern education; thus in the story of the sisters who envied their sister: "When the princes were learning to mount the managed horse and to ride, the princess could not permit them to have that advantage over her, but went through all their exercises with them,

* It may not be impertinent to subjoin, on a kindred subject, as no mention has been hitherto made of him, that the author of "The Touchstone, or paradoxes brought to the test of a rigorous and fair examination, printed for Noon, 1732," appears to have been the original projector of sailing through *the air in* a boat appended to a ball.

learning to ride the great horse, dart the javelin, and bend the bow." Arab. Nights, vol. iv. p. 276.

The two brothers had mutually engaged their children to each other. Contracts of this nature were frequent amongst the Arabians; another instance occurs in the story of Noureddin Ali and Benreddin Hassan.

Nouronihar loved her cousin even more than her eyes. This mode of expression not only occurs in the sacred writers, but also in the Greek and Roman; thus, Moschus:

Τον μεν εγω τιεσκον ισον φαεεσσιν εμοισιν—

and Catullus:

Quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.

The same long, languishing looks. So Ariosto:

Negri occhi,
Pietosi a riguardare, a mover parchi.

The lines which follow, from Shakespeare and Spenser, may serve as a comment upon the brief but beautiful description of our author.

Never gazed the moon
Upon the water, as he'll stand, and read,
As 'twere, my daughter's eyes.
Winter's Tale.

Her eyes sweet smiling in delight,
Moystened their fierie beames, with which she thrild
Fraile hearts, yet quenched not; like starry light,
Which sparkling on the silent waves does seeme more bright.
*Faerie Queen.**

* Spenser seems to have copied this simile from Tasso:

Qual raggio in onda, le scintilla un rise
Negli umidi occhi tremulo e lascivo.

P. 106. *With all the bashfulness of a fawn.* The fawn, as better known, is here substituted for the gazelle of the Arabians, an animal uncommonly beautiful and shy.

Take refuge in the arms of Nouronihar. Ample scope is here left to the imagination of the reader, and Tasso will assist him to fill up the picture.

> Sovra lui pende: ed ei nel grembo molle
> Le posa il capo, e'l volto al volto attolle.
> *La Gerus.* xvi. 18.

Shadukiam and Ambreabad. These were two cities of the peries in the imaginary region of Ginnistan; the former signifies pleasure and desire, the latter the city of Ambergris. See Richardson's Dissertat. p. 169.

Young girls drawing cool water from the streams below. The office of fetching water in the East belongs to women, and particularly to "young women that are single." The cool of the evening was the season to procure a supply for the morrow; this custom is of great antiquity; an instance of it occurs in the writings of Moses, and in Homer not unfrequently. Shaw's Travels, p. 241; Chardin's MS. (cited by Harmer) Gen. xxiv. 15—45; Odyss. xx. 154, x. 105, vii. 20.

P. 109. *A spoon of Cocknos.* The cocknos is a bird whose beak is much esteemed for its beautiful polish, and sometimes used as a spoon; thus in the History of Atalmulck and Zelica Begum, it was employed for a similar purpose: "Zelica having called for refreshment, six old slaves instantly brought in and distributed Mahramas; and then served about in a great basin of martabam a salad made of herbs

of various kinds, citron juice, and the pith of cucumbers; they served it first to the princess in a cocknos's beak; she took a beak of the salad, eat it, and gave another to the next slave that sat by her on her right hand, which slave did as her mistress had done."

P. 112. *Goules.* Goul or *ghul,* in Arabic signifies any terrifying object which deprives people of the use of their senses; hence it became the appellative of that species of monster which was supposed to haunt forests, cemeteries, and other lonely places, and believed not only to tear in pieces the living, but to dig up and devour the dead. Richardson's Dissert. pp. 174—274. That kind of insanity called by the Arabians *kutrub* (a word signifying not only a wolf, but likewise a male goul), which incites such as are afflicted with it to roam howling amidst those melancholy haunts, may cast some light on the nature of the possession recorded by St. Mark, chap. v. 1, &c.

P. 113. *Feathers of the heron, sparkling with carbuncles.* Panaches of this kind are amongst the attributes of eastern royalty. Tales of Inatulla, vol. ii. p. 205.

Whose eyes pervade the inmost soul of a female. The original in this instance, as in the others already noticed, is more analogous to the French than the English idiom: *dont l'oeil pénétre jusqu' à la moelle des jeunes filles.*

The carbuncle of Giamschid. This mighty potentate was the fourth sovereign of the dynasty of the Pischadians, and brother or nephew to Tahamurath; his proper name was *Giam* or *Gem,* and *Schid,* which in the language of the ancient Persians denominated the sun, an addition ascribed by some

to the majesty of his person, and by others to the splendour of his actions. One of the most magnificent monuments of his reign was the city of Istakhar, of which Tahamurath had laid the foundations. This city, at present called *Gihil-*, or *Tchil-minar*, from the forty columns reared in it by Homai, or (according to our author and others* Soliman Ben Daoud, was known to the Greeks by the name of Persepolis; and there is still extant in the east a tradition that when Alexander burnt the edifices of the Persian kings, seven stupendous structures of Giamschid were consumed with his palace. This prince, after having subjected to his empire seven vast provinces of Upper Asia, and enjoyed in peace a long reign (which some authors have protracted to seven hundred years), became intoxicated with his greatness, and, foolishly fancying it would have no end, arrogated to himself divine honours; but the Almighty raised up, even in his own house, a terrible instrument to abase his pride, by whom he was easily overcome and driven into exile. The author of Giame al Tavatikh mentions the cup or concave mirror of Giamschid, formed of a gem, and called the cup of the sun; to this vessel the Persian poets often refer, and allegorize it in different ways; they attribute to it the property of exhibiting everything in the compass of nature, and even some things that are preternatural; the gem it consisted of appears to be the carbuncle or oriental ruby, which, from its resemblance to a burning coal and the splendour it was supposed to emit in the dark, was called *schebgerag*, or the torch of the night; according to Strabo it obtained its high es-

* Examen Critique des Anciens Historiens d'Alexandre le Grand, p. 287.

timation amongst the Persians, who were worshippers of fire, from its igneous qualities, and perhaps those virtues for which it hath been styled "the first of stones." Milton had a learned retrospect to its fabulous powers in describing the Old Serpent:

> His head
> Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes.

Herbelot, pp. 392, 395, 780, &c.; Brighte on Melancholie, p. 321; Paradise Lost, ix. 499.

The torches were extinguished. From the emblems of royalty in the vision, and the closing declaration of the last voice, it is evident that these torches, λαμπαδας αντι των νυμφικων του δαιμονος ἁψαντος, were lighted by the dive, to prognosticate* the destined union, of which the water in the bath was a further omen. Thus Lactantius: "A veteribus institutum est, ut sacramento ignis et aquæ nuptiarum fœdera sanciantur, quod fœtus animantium calore et humore corporentur atque animentur ad vitam. Unde aqua et igne uxorem accipere dicitur." Ovid. Fast. iv. 792; Var. de ling. Lat. iv. 10; Serv. ad Virg. Æn. iv. 167. Of the union here prefigured the sequel will allow to be added:

> Non Hymenæus adest illi, non gratia lecto;
> Eumenides tenuere faces, de funere raptas:
> Eumenides stravere torum.

P. 114. *She clapped her hands.* This was the ordinary method in the east of calling the attendants in waiting. See Arabian Nights, vol. i. pp. 5, 106, 193, &c.

* Mihi deductæ fax omen prætulit.
Propert. IV. iii. 13.

Whence got you false keys? come, to your chamber! I will shut you up in the double tower. It was the office of Shaban as chief eunuch to keep the key of the ladies' apartment. In the story of Ganem, Haroun al Raschid commands Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, "to take the perfidious Fetnah, and shut her up in the dark tower." That tower was within the enclosure of the palace, and commonly served as a prison for the favourites who might chance to disgust the Caliph.

P. 116. *Set him upon his shoulders.* The same mode of carrying boys is noted by Sandys; and Ludeke has a passage still more to the purpose: "Liberos dominorum suorum grandiusculos ita humeris portant servi, ut illi lacertis suis horum collum, pedibus vero latera amplectantur, sicque illorum facies super horum caput emineat." Expositio Brevis, p. 37.

His cheeks became the colour of the blossom of the pomegranate. The modest blush of an ingenuous youth (which a Grecian lady of admired taste averred to be the finest colour in nature) is denominated by the Arabians from this very flower. Solomon, in his exquisite Idyllium, hath adopted the same comparison, ch. iv. v. 3; כפלח הרמון רקתך Thy cheeks are like the opening bloom* of the pome-

*Simon interprets פלח by *eruptio floris*, and Guarini by *balaustium*; senses, which the following passage from Pliny will support: "Primus pomi hujus partus flore incipientis, Cytinus vocatur Græcis—. In hoc ipso cytino flosculi sunt, antequam scilicet malum ipsum prodeat, erumpentes, quos balaustium vocari diximus." Nat. Hist. lib. xxiii. 59, 60. According to Dioscorides, i. 132, the *balaustium* was the blossom of the wild, and the citynus of the cultivated pomegranate. Dr. Durell, justly dissatisfied with the versions before him,

granate. But a more apposite use of this similitude occurs in an ode by a poet of Damascus: "The blossom of the pomegranate brings back to my mind the blushes of my beloved, when her cheeks are coloured with a modest resentment."

P. 117. *As her hands evince.* When females in the East are betrothed, their palms and fingers are tinged of a crimson colour with the herb hinnah. This is called the crimson of consent. Tales of Inatulla, vol. ii. p. 15.

Violate the rites of hospitality. So high an idea of these rites prevails amongst the Arabians, that a bread and salt traitor is the most opprobrious invective with which one person can reproach another. Richardson's Dissert. p. 219; see also the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, in the Arabian Nights, vol. iv. p. 166.

P. 119. *Narcotic powder.* A drug of the same quality mixed in lemonade is given to Zobeide, in the story of Ganem.

P. 121. *Funeral vestments were prepared, their bodies washed, &c.* The rites here practised had obtained from the earliest ages; most of them may be found in Homer and the other poets of Greece. Lucian describes the dead in his time as washed,

hath rendered the hemistich thus; thy cheeks are like a piece of pomegranate—and adds: "The cheeks are compared to a piece of this fruit, because the pomegranate when whole is of a dull colour, but when cut up of a lively beautiful vermilion." But if this interpretation and reasoning be allowed, Solomon was less pat at a simile than Sancho; for whether the cheeks of a blooming bride—or the inwards of a man, "just cleft from noddle down to nock"—be more like a split pomegranate? "let the forest judge." Durell's Critical Remarks, p. 293? Don Quixote, tom. iii. p. 282.

perfumed, vested, and crowned, ὥρησιν ἀνθέων, with the flowers most in season; or, according to other writers, those in particular which the deceased were wont to prefer. The elegant editor of the Ruins of Palmyra mentions the fragments of a mummy found there, the hair of which was plaited exactly in the manner as worn at present by the women of Arabia. The burial dress from the days of Homer hath been commonly white, and amongst Mahometans is made without a seam, that it may not impede the ceremonial of kneeling in the grave when the dead person undergoes examination. Homer, Euripides, &c. passim; Lucian, tom. ii. p. 927; Paschal de Coron. p. 225; Ruins of Palmyra, pp. 22, 23; Iliad Σ. 352; Relig. Cerem. vol. vii. p. 117.

All instruments of music were broken. Thus in the Arabian Nights: "Haroun Al Raschid went over Schemselnihar, and before he left the room ordered all the musical instruments to be broken." Vol. ii. p. 196.

Imans began to recite their prayers. An Iman is the principal priest of a mosque. It was the office of the Imans to precede the bier, praying as the procession moved on. Relig. Cerem. vol. vii. p. 117.

P. 123. *The wailful cries of La Ilah illa Alla!* This exclamation, which contains the leading principle of Mahometan belief, and signifies there is no God but God, was commonly uttered under some violent emotion of mind. The Spaniards adopted it from their Moorish neighbours, and Cervantes hath used it in Don Quixote: "En esto llegáron corriendo con grita, lililies [literally professions of faith in Alla] y algazara los de las libreas, adonde Don Quixote suspenso y atónito estava." Parte Segunda, *cap. lxi.* tom. iv. p. 241. The same expression is

sometimes written by the Spaniards *Lihila*, and *Hila hilahaila*.

P. 125. *The Angel of Death had opened the portal of some other world.* The name of this exterminating angel is Azrael, and his office is to conduct the dead to the abode assigned them, which is said by some to be near the place of their interment. Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 101; Hyde in notis ad Bobov. p. 19; R. Elias, in Tishbi; Buxtorf Synag. Jud. et Lexic. Talmud.

P. 125. Monker and Nakir. These are two black angels of a tremendous appearance, who examine the departed on the subject of his faith; by whom if he give not a satisfactory account, he is sure to be cudgelled with maces of red-hot iron, and tormented more variously than words can describe. Relig. Ceremon. vol. vii. pp. 59, 68, 118; vol. v. p. 290; Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 101, and one of the MSS. specified in the preface.

The fatal bridge. This bridge called in Arabic *al Sirat*, and said to extend over the infernal gulf, is represented as narrower than a spider's web, and sharper than the edge of a sword. Though the attempt to cross it be

> More full of peril, and advent'rous spirit,
> Than to o'erwalk a current, roaring loud,
> On the unsteadfast footing of a spear;

yet the paradise of Mahomet can be entered by no other avenue; those indeed who have behaved well need not be alarmed, mixed characters will find it difficult, but the wicked soon miss their standing and plunge headlong into the abyss. Pococke in Port. Mos. p. 282, &c. Milton apparently copied

from this well-known fiction, and not as Dr. Warton conjectured, from the Poet Sadi, his way

> Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
> Tamely endur'd a bridge of wond'rous length,
> From hell continu'd, reaching the utmost orb
> Of this frail world.

A certain series of years. According to the tradition from the Prophet, not less than nine hundred nor more than seven thousand.

The sacred camel. It was an article of the Mahometan creed that all animals would be raised again, and some of them admitted into paradise; the animal here mentioned appears to have been one of those white-winged camels,* caparisoned with gold, which Ali affirmed would be provided to convey the faithful. Relig. Cer. vol. vii. p. 70; Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 112; Al Jauheri. Ebno'l Athir, &c.

P. 128. *Panniers.* This sort of basket-work hath been long used in the east, and consists of the leaves of the date-bearing palm. Panniers of this texture are of great utility in conveying fruits, bread, &c., whilst heavier articles, or such as require a more compact covering, are carried in bags of leather or skin. Hasselquist's Voyage, p. 261.

The Caliph presented himself to the Emir in a new light. The propensity of a vicious person, in affliction, to seek consolation from the ceremonies of religion is an exquisite trait in the character of Vathek.

* Tarafa, amongst other circumstances in the description of his camel, notices her "bushy tail, which appears as if the two wings of a large white eagle were transfixed by an awl to the bone, and hung waving round both her sides." Moallakat, p. 19.

P. 136. *The waving of fans.* These fans consisted of the trains of peacocks or ostriches, whose quills were set in a long stem so as to imbricate the plumes in the gradations of their natural growth. Fans of this fashion were formerly used in England. To judge from the language of Burton—"if he get any remnant of her's, a buske-point, a feather of her fanne, a shoo-tye, a lace"—these fans soon after became common. It was however to this kind that Milton alluded in a passage of Paradise Lost, the collocation of which, though disjointed through the mistake of his amanuensis, may by transposing a word be restored:

his sleep
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of fuming rills and leaves, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on ev'ry bough.

Trees whose branches are well covered with leaves may be not improperly styled feathering;* and in the language of Milton form the fan of Aurora, which, when waved by the breeze of the morning, occasions the rustling that constitutes a third in the complex sound referred to.

Wine hoarded up in bottles prior to the birth of Mahomet. The prohibition of wine by the prophet materially diminished its consumption within the limits of his own dominions; hence a reserve of it might be expected of the age here specified. The custom of hoarding wine was not unknown to the Persians, though not so often practised by them as

* Thus Mr. Whateley, the first authority in the language of picturesque description: "Large boughs feathering down often intercept the sight."

by the Greeks and the Romans. "I purchase," says Lebeid, "the old liquor at a dear rate, in dark leathern bottles long reposited, or in casks black with pitch, whose seals I break, and then fill the cheerful goblet." Moallakat, p. 53.

Excavated ovens in the rock. As substitutes for the portable ovens which were lost.

Manchets prepared by Nouronihar. Herodotus mentions a lady of equal rank performing a similar office—ἡ δε γυνη του βασιληος αυτη τα σιτια σφι επεσσε; * and the cakes which Tamar made for Amnon are well known.

P. 139. *Whirled herself round in a magical manner.* The Arabic verb (which corresponds to the Hebrew סחר and שחר) is interpreted by Willmet *scindere s. secare in orbem: inde notio circandi, more gyrandi, et hinc a motu versatili Fascinavit, incantavit.* An inflexion of the same verb is beautifully applied in the Koran, and by Hariri to the fascinating power of eloquence.

Her great camel Alboufaki. There is a singular and laboured description of a camel in the poem of Tarafa, but Alboufaki possessed qualities appropriate to himself, and which rendered him but little less conspicuous than the deformed dun camel of Aad.

P. 140. *To set forward, notwithstanding it was noon.* The employment of wood-fellers was accounted of all others the most toilsome, as those occupied in it were compelled to forego that midday cessation with which other labourers were indulged. Inatulla speaks proverbially of "woodmen in the meridian hour, scarce able to raise the arms of languor." The guides of Carathis being of this oc-

* Lib. viii. p. 685. That σιτια is to be understood in the sense above given is certain from what immediately follows.

cupation, she adroitly availed herself of it to urge them forward, without allowing them that repose during the mid-day fervour which travellers in these climates always enjoyed,* and which was deemed so essential to the preservation of their health.

P. 141. *The confines of some cemetery.* Places of interment in the east were commonly situated in scenes of solitude; we read of one in the History of the First Calender, abounding with so many monuments, that four days were successively spent in it without the inquirer being able to find the tomb he looked for; and from the story of Ganem it appears that the doors of these cemeteries were often left open. Arab. Nights, vol. i. p. 112; vol. iii. p. 135.

P. 145. *A Myrabolan comfit.* The invention of this confection is attributed by M. Cardonne to Avicenna, but there is abundant reason, exclusive of our author's authority, to suppose it of a much earlier origin; both the Latins and Greeks were acquainted with the balsam, and the tree that produced it was indigenous in various parts of Arabia.

P. 147. *Blue fishes.* Fishes of the same colour are mentioned in the Arabian Nights, and, like these, were endowed with the gift of speech.

* Psalm xci. 5. The explanatory iteration of the subsequent verse points out a congruity between the Hebrew poet and Homer. As the contagion amongst the Greeks produced by the excessive heat of the sun was assigned in the Iliad to the arrows of the God of light, so the destruction that wasteth at noon is attributed in the psalm to the arrow that flieth by day. It has been observed by a nobleman of many accomplishments, that this verse should be added to the other passages of Scripture which have been noted in the writings ascribed to Zoroaster.

P. 150. *Nests still higher than the clouds.* The metaphor of a nest for a secure habitation occurs in the sacred writings; thus Habakkuk: "Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil;" and Obadiah: "though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars," &c. The genius here mentioned seems to have been adopted from the Jewish notion of guardian angels, to whom the superintendence of children is supposed to be committed, and to which our Saviour himself hath referred (Matt. xviii. 10); whilst the original possessors of the nest may be presumed to have been some of those marvellous birds so frequently mentioned in Eastern romance.

Waving streamers on which were inscribed the names of Alla and the Prophet. The position that "there is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet," pervades every part of the Mahometan religion. Banners, like those here described, are preserved in the several mosques, and on the death of extraordinary persons are borne before the bier in solemn state. Relig. Cerem. vol. vii. p. 119, 120.

P. 151. *Astrolabes.* The mention of the Astrolabe may be deemed incompatible at first view with chronological exactness, as there is no instance of any being constructed by a Mussulman till after the time of Vathek. It may however be remarked, to go no higher, that Sinesius, bishop of Ptolemais, invented one in the fifth century; and that Carathis was not only herself a Greek, but also cultivated those sciences which the good Mussulmans of her time all held in abhorrence. Bailly, Hist. de l'Astronom. Moderne, tom. i. p. 563, 573.

P. 154. *On the banks of the stream hives and oratories.* The bee is an insect held in high veneration amongst the Mahometans, it being pointed out in the Koran "for a sign unto the people that understand;" the Santons therefore who inhabit the fertile banks of Rocnabad, are not less famous for their hives than their oratories. Herbelot, p. 717.

Harbingers of the imperial procession began to proclaim. This circumstance of sending heralds to announce the approach of a sovereign reminds us of "the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

P. 156. *Sheiks, Cadis.* Sheiks are the chiefs of the societies of Dervishes; Cadis are the magistrates of a town or city.

Asses in bridles of riband inscribed from the Koran. As the judges of Israel in ancient days rode on white asses, so amongst the Mahometans, those that affect an extraordinary sanctity use the same animal in preference to the horse. Sir John Chardin observed in various parts of the East that their reins, as here represented, were of silk, with the name of God, or other inscriptions upon them. Ludeke Expos. brevis, p. 49; Chardin's MS. cited by Harmer.

P. 159. *One of these beneficent Genii, assuming the exterior of a shepherd, &c., began to pour from his flute, &c.* The flute was considered as a sacred instrument, which Jacob and other holy shepherds had sanctified by using. Religious Cerem. vol. vii. p. 110.

Involuntarily drawn towards the declivity of the hill. A similar instance of attraction may be seen in the story of Prince Ahmed and the Peri Paribanon. Arabian Nights, vol. iv. p. 243.

P. 160. *Eblis.* Herbelot supposes this title to have been a corruption of Διαβολος. It was the appellation conferred by the Arabians upon the Prince of

the Apostate Angels, whom they represent as exiled to the infernal regions for refusing to worship Adam, at the command of the Supreme.

Compensate for thy impieties by an exemplary life. It is an established article of the Mussulman creed, that the actions of mankind are all weighed in a vast unerring balance, and the future condition of the agents determined according to the preponderance of evil or good. This fiction, which seems to have been borrowed from the Jews, had probably its origin in the figurative language of Scripture; thus Psalm lxii. 9. "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." And in Daniel, the sentence against the king of Babylon inscribed on the wall: "Thou are weighed in the balance, and found wanting."

P. 163. *Balkis.* This was the Arabian name of the Queen of Sheba, who went from the south to hear the wisdom and admire the glory of Solomon; the Koran represents her as a worshipper of fire. Solomon is said not only to have entertained her with the greatest magnificence, but also to have raised her to his bed and his throne. Al Koran, ch. xxvii. and Sale's notes; Herbelot, p. 182.

P. 164. *Of an architecture unknown in the records of the earth—an immense palace, whose walls were embossed with various figures, &c.* Thus Pellegrino Gaudenzi, in his description of the palace of sin:

> Enorme pondo al suolo, immensa mole
> D' aspri macigni intesta e negri marmi
> Per cui serpeggian di sanguigna tinta
> Lugubri vene: l'atterito sguardo
> Muto s'arresta sull' altera fronte
> Ch' entro le nubi si sospinge, e s' alza

Superbamente a minacciar le stelle:
Sotto grand' archi su marmoree basi
Fan di sè mostra simulacri orrendi
Che in faccia ad essa i Demon fabbri alzaro.
La Nascita di Cristo, c. i.

The chief of the eunuchs, trembling with fear, besought Vathek that a fire might be kindled. Ητορ παχρονται, the very heart of Bababalouk is congealed with apprehension. Where can a more exquisite trait, both of nature and character, be found than this request of the eunuch presents?

P. 166. *They seemed not walking, but falling.* A similar kind of progression is described by Milton:

By the hand he took me rais'd;
And over fields and waters, as in air,
Smooth-sliding without step last led me.

P. 167. *The pavement, strewed over with saffron.* There are several circumstances in the story of the Third Calender that resemble those here mentioned, particularly a pavement strewed with saffron and the burning of ambergris and aloes wood.

A throng of genii and other fantastic spirits, danced, &c. A dance of the same kind, and by similar performers, occurs in the History of Ahmed and the Peri Paribanon.

P. 168. *Let us haste and present you to Eblis.* If our author's description of the Arch-Apostate be examined by the criterion of Arabian faith, and in reference to the circumstances of the story, there can be no difficulty in appreciating its merit; Gaudenzi, in the poem already cited, hath described the appearance of Satan previous to the birth of Christ, in a manner that deserves to be noticed, though the poem itself were less scarce:

Fra questo orror da sue radici scosso
Trema repente il suolo, e all' Oriente
Ardua montagna con rimbombo estremo
S'apre per mezzo: immensa foce oscura
Mugghia dal fondo, e fumo, e fiamme, e lampi
Sboccano a un tratto; i sfracellati massi
Rotando ardenti nel sulfureo flutto
Stampan la piaggia di profonda traccia.
Dai neri gorghi del dolente regno
Con furibondo orribile muggito
Rimonta per l'aperta ampia vorago
L'Angiol d'abisso a funestar la terra.
Come dell' ocean sola tiranna
Sconcia Balena per gli ondosi campi
Move animosa, e coll' enorme petto
L'ampia spezzando rimugghiante massa
Alzasi al giorno, e nel turbato fondo
Il muto armento di sua mole adombra;
Tale Satan per vasto mar di fiamme
Ergesi a nuoto: immense ali protese
Alto flagellan con sonoro scroscio
L'onda infernal, che in rosseggianti righe
Sbalza stridente, e il ciel veste di foco.
Sotto grand' archi di vellute, ciglia,
Quasi comete sanguinose erranti
Per tenebrose vie, di rabbia pregni
Volvonsi gli occhi, e in cavernoso speco
Orrida s'apre l'infiammata bocca
Aure spirante di veleno infette.*

*Several expressions in this passage appear to have been imitated from the following of Tasso:

Orrida maestà nel fero aspetto
Terrore accresce, e più superbo il rende:
Rossegian gli occhj, e di veneno infetto,
Come infausta cometa, il guardo splende:
Gl' involve il mento, e su l'irsuto petto
Ispida e folta la gran barba scende:
E in guisa di voragine profonda,
S'apre la bocca d'atro sangue immonda.

La Gerus. c. iv. st. 9.

Egli d'avanza, e il suol guatando e il cielo.
Impaziente con le negre braccia
Le rupi affera, e d'un immenso slancio
Balza al confin della frapposta arena.
Mille del suo furor seguaci Spirti
Ch' erangli sotto per gl' igniti gorghi
Sfilangi dietro, e coll' intento sguardo
In lui rivolti gli si fanno al fianco.
In sua possanza alteramente fiera
Stassi l'oste d' Averno, e adombra il piano,
Siccome mille e mille annose quercie
Che a' piè d'un' alta ferruginea rupe
Aride e negre al cielo ergon le teste.
S'addopian l'ombre della notte, e sola
Al folgorar degl' infernali sguardi
Arde da lungi la solinga piaggia,
Come spezzata da funeste vampe
Massa di nembi.

Ouranabad. This monster is represented as a fierce flying hydra, and belongs to the same class with the *Rakshe,* whose ordinary food was serpents and dragons, the *Soham* which had the head of a horse with four eyes and the body of a flame-coloured dragon, the *Syl,* a basilisk with a face resembling the human, but so tremendous that no mortal could bear to behold it, the *Ejder* and others. See these respective titles in Richardson's Dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English.

P. 170. *She expected to have seen some stupendous Giant.* Such is the representation which Dante hath given of this infernal sovereign:

Lo 'mperador del doloroso regno
Da mezzo 'l petto uscia fuor della ghiaccia:
E più con un gigante i' mi convegno,
Che i giganti non fan con le sue braccia.

It is more than probable (though it has not been noticed) that Don Quixote's mistake of the windmills for giants was suggested to Cervantes by the following simile, in which the tremendous personage above mentioned is so compared:

> Però dinanzi mira
> Disse 'l maestro mio, se tu 'l discerni,
> Come quando una grossa nebbia spira,
> O quando l' emisperio nostro annotta
> Par da lungi un mulin che 'l vento gira,
> Veder mi parve un tal dificio allotta.

What confirms this conjecture is the reply to Sancho's question, "What giants?" made by Don Quixote, in reference to the two last lines of the preceding citation:

> "And nearer to a giant's is my size
> Than giants are when to his arms compar'd."

"Those thou seest yonder, with their vast arms, and some of them there are that reach nearly two leagues." Don Quixote, parte prim. capit. viii. p. 52; Dante dell' Inferno, cant. xxxiv. It may be added that a rising wind is mentioned in both.

Creatures of clay. Nothing could have been more appositely imagined than this compellation. Eblis had suffered a degradation from his primeval rank, and was consigned to these regions for having refused to worship Adam, in obedience to the supreme command; alleging in justification of his refusal, that himself had been formed of ethereal fire, whilst Adam was only a creature of clay. Al Koran, c. 55, &c.

The fortress of Aherman. In the mythology of

the Easterns, Aherman was accounted the Demon of Discord. The ancient Persian romances abound in descriptions of this fortress, in which the inferior demons assemble to receive the behests of their Prince, and from whom they proceed to exercise their malice in every part of the world. Herbelot, p. 71.

The halls of Argenk. The halls of this mighty dive, who reigned in the mountains of Kaf, contained the statues of the seventy-two Solimans, and the portraits of the various creatures subject to them, not one of which bore the slightest similitude to man; some had many heads, others many arms, and some consisted of many bodies; their heads were all very extraordinary, some resembling the elephant's, the buffalo's, and the boar's, whilst others were still more monstrous. Herbelot, p. 820. Ariosto, who owes more to Arabian fable than his commentators have hitherto supposed, seems to have been no stranger to the halls of Argenk when he described the fountain of Merlin:

Era una delle fonti di Merlino
Delle quattro di Francia da lui fatte;
D'intorno cinta di bel marmo fino,
Lucido, e terso, e bianco più che latte.
Quivi d' intaglio con lavor divino
Avea Merlino immagini ritratte.
Direste che spiravano, e se prive
Non fossero di voce, ch' eran vive.

Quivi una Bestia uscir della foresta
Parea di crudel vista, odiosa, e brutta,
Che avea le orecchie d'asino, e la testa
Di lupo, e i denti, e per gran fame asciutta;
Branche avea di leon; l'altro, che resta,
Tutto era volpe.

P. 171. *Holding his right hand motionless on his heart.* Sandys observes that the application of the right hand to the heart is the customary mode of eastern salutation; but the perseverance of the votaries of Eblis in this attitude was intended to express their devotion to him both heart and hand.

P. 173. *In my life-time I filled, &c.* This recital agrees with those in the Koran and other Arabian legends.

An unrelenting fire preys on my heart. Hariri, to convey the most forcible idea of extreme anxiety, represents the heart as tormented by fierce burning coals; this form of speech it is observed is proverbial, but do we not see whence the proverb arose? Chappelow's Six Assemblies, p. 106.

P. 174. *In the abode of vengeance and despair.* Thus Dante's description over the gate of hell:

Per me si va nella città dolente:
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore:
Per me si va tra la perduta gente.
Giustizia mosse 'l mio alto fattore:
Fecemi la divina potestate,
La somma sapienza, e 'l primo amore.
Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
Se non eterne, ed io eterno duro:
Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate.

Canto 3.

Through me you pass to Mourning's dark domain;
Through me to scenes where Grief must ever pine;
Through me, to Misery's devoted train.
Justice and power in my Great Founder join,
And love and wisdom all his fabrics rear;
Wisdom above control, and love divine!
Before me Nature saw no works appear,
Save works eternal: such was I, ordained.
Quit every hope, all ye who enter here.

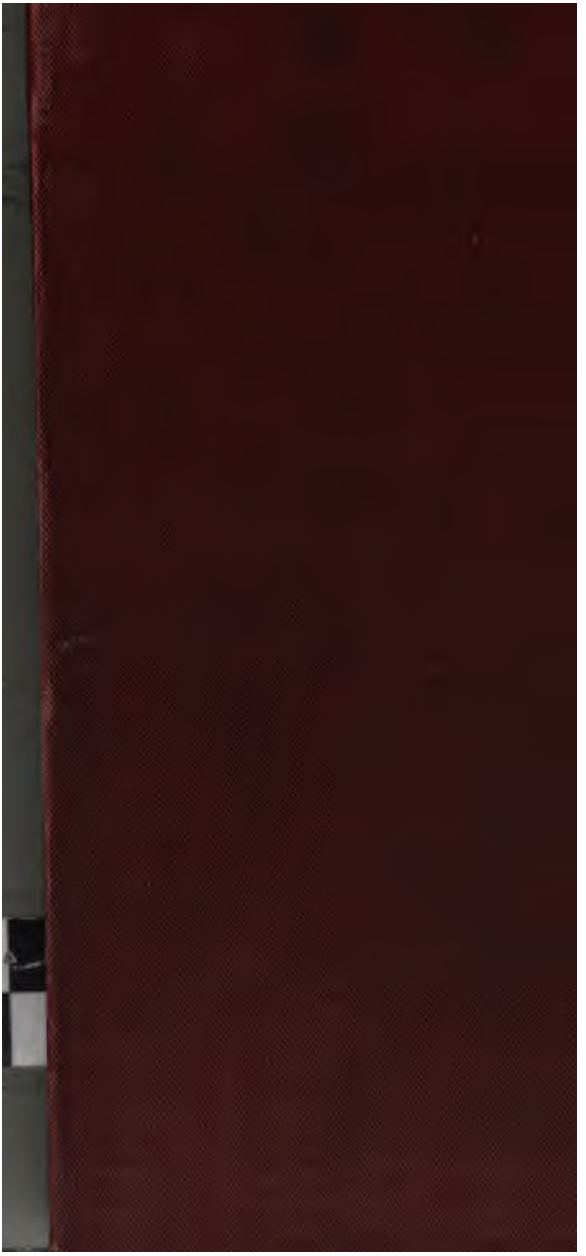
How much have the public to regret, after the specimen given, that Mr. Hayley did not complete the Inferno!

P. 178. *Carathis on the back of an Afrit.* The expedition of the afrit in fetching Carathis is characteristic of this order of dives. We read in the Koran that another of the fraternity offered to bring the Queen of Saba's throne to Solomon before he could rise from his place, ch. 27.

P. 179. *Brotherhood.* There being a lacune in his transcript of the original, the translator has ventured to insert this word, as the only one he could substitute to agree with the context.

P. 182. *Glanced off in a whirl that rendered her invisible.* It was not ill conceived to punish Carathis by a rite of that science in which she supremely delighted, and which was the primary cause of her own and Vathek's perdition. A derivative of the verb before rendered to whirl in a magical manner (see note, p. 260), signifies in the Koran the glimmering of twilight, a sense deducible from the shapeless glimpses of objects when hurried round with the velocity here described.

They at once lost the most precious of the gifts of heaven—Hope. It is a soothing reflection to the bulk of mankind that the commonness of any blessing is the true test of its value; hence hope is justly styled "the most precious of the gifts of heaven," because, as Thales long since observed—*ολι αλλο μηδεν, αυτη παρεσω*—it abides with those who are destitute of every other.

THE END.

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